THE VISVA-BHARATI QUARTERLY

Vol. III. OCTOBER, 1925 No. 3

JUDGMENT

By Rabindranath Tagore.

The young generation of men in the East are everywhere attracted by what they imagine is modern. And they have convinced themselves that Western life is modern. They are seeking from its manners and mentality the magic formula of how to grow modern. They believe that what is called modern represents the principle of indefinite growth and freedom,—it is youth, it is life.

If that is the definition of modern, then we must know that its essential element does not consist in a particular time, but in a particular truth, lacking which a thing of the latest pattern and polish may in reality be out of date and condemned to perish. A number of nations have so perished who were too late in realising that the raft of time, to which they clung believing it to be modern, had already become of the past. Are we sure that the same thing has not happened to the West, and that the atmosphere of turmoil which we find there is not due to the conflict between their present history, which is no longer modern, and the messenger of the future, which was come with its sovereign claim?

Even the paling darkness of the dawn is immensely distant from the morning light, though they are in immediate contact; and who knows if the present history of the West is not already as old as the day of the deluge?

All that is deeply human is never old. It has the perpetual freshness of imperishable life. Only the acquisitiveness which is not of growth but of hoarding, the cleverness which wins in the game of life with false cards up its sleeve, is crabbed and

wrinkled. The business of slave hunting, however up to date in form and profitable in practice, is old; cannibalism, crude or subtle, direct or indirect, with Christian surname or heathen, is never modern, not even in its beginning.

How can we ever believe that the spirit of the hungry Nation from the west, which for over a century has robbed and humiliated us in the eastern hemisphere, has found the secret of everlasting life in its reckless power? Have we lost all faith in the teaching of the wise: that the passions which mock the eternal and things that defiantly grow out of proportion with their surroundings, can never be lasting?

However that may be, the fact cannot be denied that the outstanding feature of the present age is the way in which the West has spread its physical dominance over the whole world, and is still imposing its mind upon other continents. All the great countries of the East, in some period or other of their history, had to submit to foreign invasion and foreign rule, but such alien contact was either milder in its driving force, or was more in harmony with local tradition and environment, and therefore did not attack the inner bonds of unity which maintained the personality of the people.

A complete change of condition has been brought about by the easy means of communication effected by modern science. It is no longer some resourceful individual, who comes like a comet with a host of mercenary soldiers forming his tail, suddenly crossing the path of a strange people and eventually getting entangled and assimilated; but an entire predatory nation which is able to clutch in its titanic grip the vitals of other races for whom it has no feeling of kinship.

Men who do not come as representatives of some organization, political, commercial or religious, have their simple human sentiments; they are not like ghosts who haunt human habitations and yet do not dwell in them, who obsess living beings and yet do not live their life. Such real individuals naturally tend to establish personal relationships with their neighbours and gradually attain their common unity. But Europe's connection with Asiatic countries has not yet developed that personal character in its organisations,—it is like the pressure of some

callous outgrowth of her nature, which has not the creative touch of life, but only mechanical skilfulness.

The West has come to us like an engineer who lays stone-paved roads across our meadows and orchards, over our trampled verdure, with the primary object of making easy his work of exploitation. However marvellous and convenient this may be, the overwhelming dominance of mere method and skill in our surroundings is demoralising. It so often makes us forget that, compared to life, the machine is too simple, its action too obvious its results measurable in an indubitably definite manner, its concentrated influence directed only towards the surface of our nature.

For the same reason we often witness in western countries the demonstration of immense esteem, approaching hero-worship, for some winner in a game of skill or strength. This has increased to such an inordinate degree, that a professional organiser of such games can claim better remuneration than a cultured teacher, even in an educational institution. The very superficiality inherent in mere proficiency, produces its immediate impression upon the multitude, hiding from them the higher manifestation of truth that has no definite standard of measurement.

The barbarous in us occupies a large place in human nature; it is idolatrous in its instincts, ready to prostrate itself before all representations of power that are external, that compel us to acknowledge them through our greed, or our fear, or our primitive crudity of thought and feeling. In fact the constant sight and contemplation of any success that has colossal magnitude produces the same mentality in us, as in the savage does the fetish, made emphatically apparent by its barbarity of decoration.

However, the West, which has thrust itself upon us, is the utilitarian adventurer, imbued with the idolatry of the Nation; it carries an elaborate paraphernalia of self worship, and claims other continents for its victims of sacrifice. The loudest of all the messages that it has brought to ourselves is : *You are none of us.* For this reason, even its best gifts carry for us an insult, and it is for this very reason that, when we cannot help

accepting them, we feel so small. The West has hurt us deeply with the shock of its greatness. Its very magnificence faces us with its stony gesture of refusal, allowing us to approach it as the earth does the meteorites, merely to feed with them its own dust.

The moral distance which we impose upon men to whose physical proximity we come for exploitation, is immense. This makes them appear so ridiculously diminutive as to be but dimly recognisable by our conscience. It smooths our path of self-seeking to be able to think that others are absolutely other than ourselves, that their human value is represented in coins that have an utterly different mintage from those which we claim for our own. The West, in its relationship with non-western peoples, has for its constant meditation-text : *They are radically and eternally different from ourselves.* Its cult of separateness, which is the cult of the Nation, bristles with doctrines of disdain. It displays its system of canine teeth in the barbed wire fencing round its inhospitable world, in the name of the inborn right to be supercilious, characteristic of a superior civilisation.

Asia, in its dignity of age-long tradition, at first refused to acknowledge Europe's claim of superiority. But gradually it had to own defeat at the hand of the organised power and indomitable self-assertion of the Nation, the latest-born progeny of the West. The spectacle of gigantic success with its unsheathed claws and teeth sank deeper and deeper into Eastern consciousness. The contemptuous sneer which accompanied it rankled in Asia's heart, never allowing it for a moment to remain in forgetfulness of this apparition ; till a day has arrived when Asia, overcome by the stupendous coil of muscle, has gradually yielded itself to the licking tongue of this monster : Organisation of Power.

There has been related in one of our Bengali epics the legend of a merchant who was a devout worshipper of Shiva the Good, the Pure,—Shiva who represents the principle of renunciation and the power of self-control. This man was perpetually persecuted by a deity, the fierce Snake-goddess, who in order to divert his allegiance to herself inflicted the end-

less power of her malignance upon her victim. Through a series of failures, deaths and disasters he was at last compelled to acknowledge the superior merit of the divinity of frightfulness. The tragedy does not lie in the external fact of the transfer of homage from one shrine to the other, but in the moral defeat implied in the ascribing of a higher value of truth to the goddess of success,—the personification of unscrupulous egotism,—rather than to the god of moral perfection.

So long as the West herself believed in this latest evolution of her indomitable self-assertion, and was certain that it was going to give her an indefinite extension of the monopoly of all earthly privileges, we in Asia also humbly believed in her. The western people convinced us at the point of their bayonets that they were the chosen people of God, and that the right to inherit the earth was inherent in their race because of a quality which was contrary to that of meekness. We bowed our head to the belief that external success was the ultimate criterion of truth, and I still remember the shock of surprise I felt when a rumour first came to India about Japan's readiness to accept Christianity because it was the religion of a triumphant success, the religion that had unlimited cash in the banks of its devotees and frightful machines of destruction in their arsenal. The moral humiliation of Asia could go no further, and for a moment I was frightened at the prospect of a whole world some day bringing its homage to the shrine of the Snake-goddess, deserting that of Shiva, the Good.

At that time it was difficult for western people to realise that there was anything lacking in their civilisation,—for they were so fatuously prosperous and comfortable, so smugly respectable in their behaviour among their own kinsmen. They were never tired of smiling at themselves and saying that they were good, because their drawing rooms were crowded with irrelevancy, their roads geometrically straight, their minds clever, methods efficient, arrangements convenient; because their women had pet dogs, pet schemes of benevolence and head-dresses for which creatures of rare beauty from the most inaccessible regions of the earth had paid toll with their lives.

We, who belong to other continents than theirs, dwell in

the obscurity of their shadow, which swallows up our hemisphere, giving us very little chance to bask in the sunshine of their success. For the attitude of success is exclusive, it is by nature suspicious and arrogant. They do not care to come into the heart of our humanity, for it is not needful for their purpose; and they can be excruciatingly funny when they talk about the peculiarity of the smell of our dwelling places, the inscrutability of our countenances, some mannerisms in our code of behaviour, or any exaggerations in our language or gesture which are different from the exaggerations customary with them and therefore unconscious. Even after this they become sincerely amazed when their energetic acquaintance with us fails to evoke in our mind a grateful feeling of adoration, or when their victims show signs of unhappiness. These they ascribe either to the machination of some interested third party, or to the incomprehensible idiosyncracies of the people with whom they deal.

It is because we are so imperfectly real to them that they try to boast of their beneficence by making a long list of the railway lines, telegraph posts, coal mines, tea plantations, and the law and order inflicted upon our lands. Their minds are so densely callous to the needs of our humanity that they are ready to punish us when we do not bless them for what they have done to ourselves, in the way of helping us with the commodities which we hardly need and which they vomit forth because they are a great deal more than they can consume themselves.

Let me quote some lines from an article on "Christian Missions" which came to my notice a few days ago:

The last century has contained instance after instance, in the Far East, in Africa, and in the islands of the sea, in which the preaching of the Gospel has seemed to the natives only preliminary to political or economic outrage. Sometimes the two have gone hand in hand. Not soon will educated Chinese forget that the charter under which the Christian missionary operates in his land was a part of that same Treaty of Nanking that legalised the importation of opium. So it is that these peoples wonder in bewilderment why the bodies that proclaim their

devotion to the setting up of the rule of God can be content with the individual type of missions, while sins that give the very Christian concept of God the lie grow luxuriant.

About the political relations of West and East the writer quotes Tyler Dennet who says :

> No nation has escaped the valid charge of bad faith. The guilt of all parties being clearly proven, it has seemed profitless to continue the discussion of guilt with a view to determining the relative degree of wickedness. Each Nation, the United States not excepted, has made its contribution to the welter of evil which now comprises the Far Eastern Question.

Speaking of economic exploitation the same writer observes :

> The ruthless manner in which the ancient handicrafts of India were destroyed to favour the mill-owners of England is a matter of parliamentary record. And the tale of the developing industrial life of India, China and Africa is being written in blood. Western business demands, and secures, all sorts of governmental exemptions and favours to ensure its profits when it goes abroad. And again and again, when there, it follows a policy of inhuman hours and starvation wages that is sowing the wind against the future. It is probable that the West thinks of Sir John Bowring—when it thinks of him at all—as the man who wrote :
>
> In the Cross of Christ I glory
> Towering o'er the wrecks of time.
>
> But the East remembers him as the indefatigable diplomat whose labours contributed so much to the legalisation of the opium traffic in China.

I agree with the author when he says that "This is the sort of international sin that most grievously besets the future—political injustice, economic exploitation, racial discrimination, material standards of success." But what to my mind is the source of a greater mischief is the fact that bribery on a prodigious scale is being used to persuade whole peoples in the East to sell their future. As the opium has shackled the mind of the coming generation of China in fetters of stupor, the silver

narcotic injected into the people's constitution is creating a chronic national helplessness, inducing a habit which will make the motherland sell her own children. The bribery which has the sanctimonious appearance of benevolence is the most dangerous form of banditry; for through its unctuous exuberance a huge load of ransom noiselessly drags the country to a bottomless insolvency.

We have seen in the late war that moral camouflage creates useful delusion not only in the minds of the opponents but in those of one's own party, and for the same reason a vast ethical department is necessary as an adjunct to the organisation of exploitation. For the hand that draws blood is greatly helped if it is guided by the idea that it is translating some Sunday School lesson into a beautiful practice. In olden times there were tribes of men who throve upon other people's possessions. Not having that sense of decency which wears a protective decoration they used very little material or moral clothing. They are described in history as savage tribes with criminal tendencies. They remained isolated; no respectable peoples copied their manners. Such narrowness of seclusion itself made their mischievous power shortlived and restricted it to a small area.

In modern times they have changed their names and methods, and even while a great portion of the world is being ripped open by the iron claws of their organisation they have no hesitation in believing in the sure foundation of their civilisation and the perfection of its superstructure. It produces such a moral confusion that even we, who are their victims, are willing to copy them.

In fact we are beginning to be ashamed of our trust in what we call *dharma,* the sovereignty of the inner world of ideals. We think that it is a sign of the possession of some brand-new type of cleverness, shiningly up-to-date, to be able to join in the chorus of cynical laughter at a faith in the reality of moral truth.

So we watched for long the outer horizon and there saw no portent of storm-clouds overtaking the fair weather in the

West; in fact, all our meteorological misgivings pointed their arrow-heads to the thunder-bearing forces from the West carrying menace in other directions. We had been witnessing for too long the triumph in human history of the law of natural selection prevalent in the biological world, the elbowing out of the less offensive by the aggressive pressure of a superior pushfulness. All our calculations come to be based upon the working of that law, till, at last, the man in us made his final obeisance to the brute in us and uttered in awe: *Hail, unholy Might*!

While such a hymn of praise was being raised in all the countries of the world, both by the victors and the vanquished, while the races favoured by fortune dreamt of nothing else but the sharpening of their military fangs and the lengthening of their commercial suckers; while the defeated peoples were cherishing the hope, and secretly preparing, to be able one day to contribute their own share of devilry to the political nightmare of the modern cult of nationalism; the most devastating war that ever happened tore into tatters the enormous self-satisfaction of Europe. She has lately been startled into realising that its origin was not from outside.

Up to this moment she had been at the zenith of her power and brilliancy; to outward seeming she had conquered endless time for her boundless prosperity, while she had been moulding with a pitiless success the destiny of millions of alien people to fashion her own footstool and keep it permanently secure. The barometer which recorded the external condition of the atmosphere foreboded a perpetual monotony of fair weather. There had been, no doubt, angry flashes of lightning from the friction created by colliding greeds, but it was firmly believed that the urging of an intelligent self-interest was itself sufficient to check any of these violent gestures from ending in a catastrophe.

Then came the day when everything that had given her supremacy in the world seemed to turn against her and the Science which she had tamed for a hunting expedition tore ugly rents in her own limbs, which still show no sign of healing. So her proud mind has had to come to the conclusion that her

present suffering is not due to any lack of intellectual attainment or material advantage, but to some cancerous growth within her own moral nature.

This has, at length, given us in Asia the opportunity of judging Europe with our mind freed from the hypnotism of success, —an opportunity necessary for our own salvation. This judgment must not be in a spirit of retaliation, which chuckles at the chance of hurling back at the West some part of the evil-smelling mud which she was never tired of flinging at the unprotected Orient. Nevertheless we must have the courage to judge. For the standard of moral judgment is the true helm of our life. Lately it has been laughed at by the modern young person for being stationary, and our hold upon it has been slackened. We must regain our confidence in it, knowing that this helm is more necessary for us to-day than ever before, because we are overtaken by a current that is sudden and swift, by winds that are changing, and because we must move among breakers.

Fight there must be in this world. We cannot make truce with impunity. Our evolution towards the perfect has been and has to be through a series of fights. Our moral judgment is the best weapon we have in the warfare for the preservation of humanity. With it we have to resist, and even to hurt, for the cause of justice.

Have we not noticed in the modern East how the people who have a highly developed instinct for turning out things of perfect beauty for their daily life show utter crudity in their selection of western articles for show or for use? They completely forget the dignity of the true born aristocracy which they possess in the world of craftsmanship when they try to acquire or imitate the furniture and other western appliances that bear the brand of the outcast. They carelessly allow the aggression of weeds into their garden where flowers have been nourished by the love and the sensitive understanding of generations of their forefathers. It has been made possible because they have blindly surrendered their judgment of excellence, overwhelmed by the spectacle of a robust success. In their

infatuation they rob Apollo of his homage in order to offer it to the image of Hercules.

My heart was filled with shame and pain when I passed by the ruined mounds of the Summer Palace of Pekin, brought to the dust by those who were furiously loud in their condemnation of the destruction of some ancient cathedrals of Europe by their enemies. Yet they can be forgiven, for they knew not what they had been doing. They merely personated an unintelligent storm of fury which had a scientific throughness of brutality, and they wantonly destroyed buildings, pictures and objects of art the like of which was never seen before nor will be in the future.

But it fills my heart with despair when I realise that the modern Chinese are themselves helping in the devastation of the genius of China, daily growing used to things that are merely convenient and forgetting the miracle of creative touch which their fingers have acquired. It shows a laziness of apathy which is uncivilised. True civilisation knows the value of things that belong to the higher nature of man and is ever ready to take trouble to produce them, use them, and maintain them in their excellence. To succumb to the temptation of cheap production and hasty utility is the sign of the shallow mind that seeks its release from the strenuous claim of high aspiration in the vulgar comfort of standardised respectability. The educated China of to-day seems to have surrendered its judgment of taste and through this defeat is threatened with a desert of white monotony swallowing up the colours and features of its civilisation.

The surender of moral judgment is also a defeat through which the invasion of the West is laying its stony road across the soul of the East, leading most of its traffic of ideas to the gambling den of commerce and politics, to the furious competition of suicide in the arena of military lunacy. Shady paths that ran into various avenues of life carrying the invitation of hearts and the call of co-operation, are one by one being closed. This also is helping the monotonous extension of that aspect of the West which is not fruit-bearing.

But we must not allow this to go on. We must find our

voice to be able to say to the West : "You may force your things into our homes, you may obstruct our prospects of life,—but *we judge you.* You may ignore our judgment. Materially it will not injure you, nor check you in your climbing up the dizzy precipice of profit and power, but it will save us from moral degradation. We refuse to humiliate ourselves by saying that you are worthy of obedience because you are strong, worthy of respect because you are rich."

What I have discussed above only shows that in its relation to the eastern peoples the aspect of western character which has come uppermost is not only insulting to us but to the West itself. Nothing could have been more unfortunate in the history of man than this. For all meetings of men should reveal some great truth which is worthy of a permanent memorial, such, as for instance, had been the case of India's meeting with China in the ancient time.

At the moment when the West came to our door, the whole of Asia was asleep, the darkness of night had fallen over her life. Her lights were dim, her voice mute. She had stored up in her vaults her treasure, no longer growing. She had her wisdom shut in her books. She was not producing living thoughts or fresh forms of beauty. She was not moving forward but endlessly revolving round her past. She was not ready to receive the West in all her majesty of soul.

The best in us attracts the best in others : our weakness attracts violence to our neighbourhood, as thinness in the air attracts a storm. To remain in the fulness of our manifestation is our duty, not only for ourselves but for others. We have not seen the great in the West because we have failed to bring out the great that we have in us and we delude ourselves into thinking that we can hide this deficiency behind borrowed feathers.

Yet, through all our shame and our suffering, we have to acknowledge that the West is great. With her science she has offered a grand illumination to the path of reason. Some people in the East are in the habit of reviling science, calling it materialistic. They may as well say that incendiarism is in the fire. Science is truth. It is immaterial. It gives us freedom

in the realm of matter. It brings our mind into touch with the eternal at the uttermost brink of the finite. What if science can help some temperaments solely to cultivate materialism,—cannot religion do the same? We have witnessed in the East the grossest form of materialism and the cruellest form of inhumanity stalking abroad in our society wearing the uniform of spiritual culture. We constantly see the epicureanism of religious emotion, indulged in by self-centred individuals, admired by simple-minded people as piety in full blossom.

On the other hand, the usual form of spiritual expression we find in the lives of the best individuals in western countries is their love of humanity, their spirit working through their character; their keen intellect and their indomitable will leaguing together for human welfare. In their individuals it reveals itself in loyalty to the cause of truth for which so many of them are ready to suffer martyrdom, often standing heroically alone against some fury of their national insanity. When their wide human interest, which is intellectual, takes a moral direction, it grows into a fulness of intelligent service of man that can ignore all geographical limits and racial habits of tradition. The goodness which is undaunted in its chivalrous adventure, and love of truth, variedly active and widespread in its ministration, we do not see in the East.

But, because in their individual lives the western peoples have raised the tower of their moral standard so high, the ravage of their national unrighteousness at the base is fraught with dangerous consequence. Bespattering the whole world with their diplomatic lies, continually adding to the number of victims for their man-eating prosperity, scientifically crushing the human rights of large continents of races, spreading a contagion of ugly carbuncles all over the earth with the impurity of their utilitarian touch, keeping their snarling nastiness bared at the entrance of their miserly national mansion,—they have, in all these, an ever increasing gravitational pull against the top of their greatness. The fall will be terrific.

But what is most unfortunate for us in Asia is the fact that the advent of the West into our continent has been accompanied not only by science, which is truth and therefore welcome, but

by an impious use of truth for the violent purpose of self-seeking which converts it into a disruptive force. It is producing in the countries with which it is in contact a diseased mentality that refuses moral ideals, considering them to be unworthy of those who aspire to be rulers of men, and who must furiously cultivate their fitness to survive. That such a philosophy of survival, fit for the world of tigers, cannot but bring a fatal catastrophe in the human world, they do not see. They become violently angry at those who protest against it, fearing that such a protest might weaken in them the animal that should be allowed to survive for eternity.

Doctors know that infusion of animal blood into human veins does not give vigour to man but produces death, and the intrusion of the animal into humanity will never be for its survival. But faith in man is weakening even in the East, for we have seen that science has enabled the inhuman to prosper, the lie to thrive, the machine to rule in the place of *Dharma*. Therefore in order to save us from the anarchy of weak faith we must stand up to-day and judge the West.

But we must guard against antipathy that produces blindness. We must not disable ourselves from receiving truth. For the West has appeared before the present-day world not only with her dynamite of passion and cargo of things but with her gift of truth. Until we fully accept it in a right spirit we shall never even discover what is true in our own civilisation and make it generously fruitful by offering it to the world. The culture, the humanity of the West do not belong to the Nation but to the People.

While nations fight for their exclusive possessions, the peoples share with one another their true wealth. And the highest spirit of the peoples of the West, their loyal love of truth and active love of man, we must try to make our own in order to impart to our life a movement and to our ideals a vitality that shall give them the impulse to produce new flower and fruit.

THE INDO-ARYAN GODS OF THE VEDIC PERIOD.

By Dr. Sten Konow.

From their old homes beyond the north-western frontier the Indo-Aryans had brought some fundamental ideas and conceptions,—the belief in numerous uncontrollable forces and potencies which are of vital importance for man's life in the world, and some half-social, half-religious ideas about the sacredness of the laws and regulations prevalent in the family and the State. And their conception of the primeval forces had, as we have already seen, partly been remodelled after the pattern of powerful Aryan kings. The general impression, which we get from the Vedas of the mentality of the Vedic Aryans, is that it had, in essential features, remained at the Indo-European stage.

It is impossible to understand the later development unless we bear in mind that the fundamental conception was not that the Universe was ruled by gods, or heavenly kings, who could if they liked, follow their varying moods. The world was regulated by ideas, by primeval forces, which could only act in conformity with their own nature, and in accordance with the eternal laws inherent in them.

This notion might be modified, and indeed it did become modified, under the influence of the state of things when royal power became paramount and could dictate its own laws. It was bound to become still further modified when conditions became unsettled, in times of war and trouble. Then the powerful Chief would often be able to change the regular course of events and lead their development in the direction he wished. In the result the celestial counterparts of the kings, the heavenly rulers, would come to be conceived as self-willed, not bound by law or necessity. But the old foundation was always able to reassert itself. For it was not a matter of chance that the idea of *dharma,* duty and obligation, had always been uppermost in the religious mentality of the Indo-Aryans. That was the necessary consequence of their original conception of the universe as permeated by ideas and forces and regulated by them.

But even at a primitive stage man has often risen to the conception of more universal forces, whose activity is essential for the common welfare, and whose worship must be undertaken in common. We have already thought it possible to trace such a conception in the Indo-European period, in the belief in the universal force of generation and fertility, which was hailed and worshipped in public processions, and as a common undertaking. And such universal potencies are not bound to display their activity in our nearest surroundings. They are freed from immediate connection with us,—they are universal, apparently abstract ideas, but looked upon as almighty substances and potencies.

The ancient Indo-Europeans raised their thoughts above the earth-bound existence and looked upwards. Tehre they saw the eternal luminary of the Sun, benefiting the whole world, and the conception of these friendly forces was influenced by what they saw. Their abode was the bright sky, their sphere was light and not darkness, they were *devas,* roaming high above, like the sun, and also capable of displaying their activity on earth like the sun.

The prominent position occupied by gods such as Mitra and Varuna, both guardians of truth and engagements, points to the conclusion that the Aryan period was comparatively peaceful and quiet. After the Aryans had entered India, the state of things was evidently changed. In the hymns of the Rigveda we have the echo of continuous wars and struggles. The Aryans pushed forward, and the old inhabitants offered a determined resistence. We hear about their fortresses and fastnesses, which could only be reduced by energetic display of strength. The sword, and not the law or the peaceful compact, carried the day.

In such circumstances we would expect to find that conceptions of a different description with regard to the higher powers come into the forefront. A god like Varuna, who was *dhrtavrata,* who took care that solemn engagements were kept, would be less able to give the fighting Aryan what he needed at the moment, than a deity who stood for physical strength and vigour, for boldness and irresistible force. And as a matter of

fact it is a god of the latter description who stands in the foreground in the hymns of the Rigveda,—Indra, the valiant hero and warrior, who slays the Dasyus and the Dasas, reduces their kings and makes them the *dásas* or slaves of the Aryans.

At first sight this change may seem to be a step backwards. Mitra and Varuna stood for ideas of a higher kind than Indra, the hero of irresistible strength. We should be inclined to speak of a retrograde civilisation, where power and might were substitutes for righteousness and truth. But the development of a people cannot be judged by such formulas. Civilisation, even in its highest and most spiritualised forms, may easily lead to stagnation, where the old ideas, which were once living realities become mere forms, without life and possibility of advance. The vigorous expansion, the necessity of exerting oneself to the almost of one's abilities, will call to the front such qualities and faculties which have been dormant in times of peace and tranquility, and only energetic self-assertion and exertion will enable a people to do justice to itself and to the world. Difficulties and dangers are often the best training.

There is, moreover, one consideration which should not be overlooked in connection with the apparent change of mental horizon with which we are met when we turn from the Aryan to the Vedic period. Mitra and Varuna were kings, *rájan*, it is true, and they were even *samráj*, supreme rulers. But at the same time they were guardians of eternal truth and law, themselves bound to adhere to their, agreements. Indra, on the other hand, is *swaráj*, a ruler with his own will, who need not feel himself bound and restricted. We might say that the former idea is morally the higher but on the other hand the latter is bound to lead to a more exalted conception of divinity, as absolutely free in its self-assertion, with unlimited power not only to perform valorous deeds, but also to help man against overwhelming odds, even against laws which seemed to be absolutely binding. Indra as he is hymned in the Rigveda has paved the way to the belief in an almighty and merciful god, as the Indian mind has fancied him in later times, and also to the conception of man as free and unlimited in his choice, for good as for evil.

The name of Indra is not of Indian origin. The Iranians also knew it, but with them Indra is only a demi-god of subordinate rank, and there cannot be any doubt that Indra did not rise to the predominant position which he occupied in the Rigveda before the Aryans had come to India. It was then that the circumstances of life made it necessary to appeal to a divine protector who could give the Aryans what they needed,—strength and victory. His names seem to characterise him as the strong one, *Ina,* the master of power and force (*indriya*); *Sakra,* powerful, able, the lord of strength; *Sachipati,* which latter appellation was subsequently interpretated to mean "Sachi's husband,"—an idea that contributed to the development of female consorts of the great gods.

We may assume that the idea of "The strong one" had already to a certain extent been developed by our Indo-European ancesters. But it was not till circumstances pushed their demand of strength into the foreground that he became the mighty God whom we learn to know in the Rigveda. Thus on Indian soil, he became the central figure in all tales and traditions, old and new, where there is the question of over-whelming strength.

The most popular tale about Indra bears reference to pre-Indian as well as to Indian tradition. It is the old, presumably Indo-European story of the vigorous slayer of the dragon. In India the dragon is the powerful and crafty serpent Vritra, who has shut up the life-giving waters behind lofty mountains and lies on them, preventing them from fertilising the Aryan country. Indra pierces the rocks with his thunderbolt and slays the serpent. Through the hole he has bored, the rivers emerge and their waters flow through the home of the Aryans, giving life and fertility.

Different scholars have given different explanations of this myth. According to some it shows that Indra is an old god of thundering or the thunderstorm, according to others he is the god of sun and spring, who delivers the frozen waters from the spell of the demon of winter and ice, in which latter case the Vritra tale would have to be considered as inherited from a period when the Aryans were settled in a colder country farther to the North.

When once the tradition had been brought into shape, it was quite natural that it should be enlarged and combined with other tales, and also that it should receive a distinctly mythical colouring. As the Aryans pushed further towards the east, the changed climatic conditions also came to exercise a certain influence, and Indra was necessarily brought into connection with the monsoon. But the fundamental conception always remains the same. Indra is at work wherever we notice an unusual display of irresistible strength and force.

It is superfluous to enter into an analysis of the different tales and stories about Indra's feats. The nature of the conception connected with him is clear enough, it is in full agreement with the fundamental notions which the Indo-Aryans had inherited from their ancestors. I shall only mention one detail, because it is of interest for our appreciation of the development of religious ideas.

Indra is, as we have seen, a king, a *Svaráj,* who does not know any other law than his own will, and his proper field of action is the battleground, where strength and valour carries the day. It is evident that we are here faced with the results of changed circumstances within Aryan society. During the wars of conquest, the Aryan King was above all the leader in battle, and not so much the dispenser of law and justice, and this change in his position is reflected in Indra. He is a fighter and not a judge, and while Varuna and Mitra were accompanied by representatives of powers and ideas which were of primary importance in times of peace,—the so-called *Adityas,*—Indra is surrounded by warriors in arms, with shining spurs,—the so-called *Maruts.*

It is a consequence of the position occupied by Indra, that he is assigned a prominent place in the worship of the Aryans, especially at the big sacrifices of the kings and chiefs. The Rigveda is, above all, a collection of hymns sung on such occasions, and his name would accordingly be one of those most frequently met with. Such is actually the case.

We have not, however, any right to infer therefrom that Indra played the same prominent rôle in the daily worship of

individual Aryans. On the contrary, we can confidently state that such cannot have been the case. Even in those days of ancient wars, the Aryans had to think of their cattle and their cultivation, and had to settle their mutual interests in the traditional way, and not by means of arms and force. And in their daily life they had to reckon with the old forces and potencies which, at every step, made their influence felt. In addition to the great heavenly kings who were invoked at the great sacrifices, they certainly worshipped these forces and their more or less personified representatives, and we have every reason for assuming that, in everyday life the importance of such minor gods was greater than that of Indra.

It would be unwise to apply statistical methods and draw conclusions from the greater or losser frequency with which a name is mentioned in the Rigveda, as to the relative importance of different gods. Those who became the most powerful gods in later times, are comparatively rarely invoked in the Rigveda. That does not, however, prove that they were of minor importance, but only that they had a smaller place at the big sacrifices at which the hymns of the Rigveda were used. They stood for other forces which these big sacrifices did not directly aim at realizing.

One of these gods is Vishnu, who is mentioned barely a hundred times in the Rigveda and to whom but five entire hymns are addressed. According to the statistical standard, therefore, his worship would be deemed to have been of secondary importance. But the reality seems to be quite different : Vishnu is apparently an old and important god.

That he goes back into a distant part, can be inferred from what we learn about him in the Rigveda : no detailed accounts but chiefly indications, which to us are often obscure, but which to the Vedic Aryan must have been full of meaning because the myths and traditions, to which they refer, were familiar, having been transmitted from generation to generation. It was enough to mention some catch-words, and everybody knew what was meant. Vishnu must accordingly represent ancient notions, which had been condensed into standing formulas, already in the oldest Rigvedic period.

If we simply collect the most promient features of the picture of Vishnu which are met with in the Rigveda, the result is apparently meagre. We constantly hear about his three steps, with which he measures space. We are told that he provides broad dwellings for human beings, who are settled within his three steps. Of these steps the two first ones are to be perceived by ordinary men, and the makers of the sacrifice see the last and highest one in the likeness of an eye in the skies. There seems to be a reference to the sun in this saying: Vishnu's highest steps takes us up to the upper limit of the visible world, where the sun at noon can be considered as his foot-print.

It is a similar idea which has found expression when it is stated that Vishnu has supported the vault of the sky above, and fastened the earth with pegs. The wide space between earth and heaven, within which the life of all animate beings is displayed, has been created by him. And he it is who supports and nourishes heaven, earth and all beings, not however in self-willed moods, but as the protector of law, as the womb of *rita,* eternal truth.

In later times we hear more about Vishnu's stages. A tale is told about a fight between the Devas and the Asuras, who have now become the enemies of the gods. The devas are unsuccessful, and now they place Vishnu, who is often stated to be identical with *yajña,* the sacrifice, at their head, and ask the Asuras to grant them as much as Vishnu can take in three steps. This request is granted, and the sacrifice (Vishnu) proves to be equal to the whole world. Sometimes this myth takes the shape of a fairy-tale. Vishnu makes his appearance as a *vámana,* a dwarf, but after the request of the gods has been granted, he increases in size, so that he pervades the universe in three steps.

Such tales cannot, however, give us the origin of the underlying ideas in Vishnu's physiognomy. When his name is given to the dwarf with long steps, that only shows that this wide stepping was an essential feature in his picture, and as a matter of fact that is almost the only thing which we know about Vishnu in the time of the Rigveda.

In such circumstances it is not to be wondered at that Vishnu has been explained in more than one way. Most

scholars have considered him to be an ancient sun-god, and draw attention to the fact that he is sometimes identified with the sun, and that he wears the *chakra,* the disc, which has been explained as a symbol of the sun. But then we have already seen that more than one god has been identified with the sun, and with the explanation of the base of Indo-Aryan religion as a worship of forces and powers,—which I think is the only possible one,—such a state of things is easily explained.

Many different forces are observable in the sun. It gives heat like fire, it gives light, it makes man up to his work, it looks like an eye watching the dealings of man, and it measures out the sky and the day. The representatives of all such faculties and energies are therefore at work in and through the sun and can be identified with it. Varuna and Mitra look on man's doings through the sun-eye. Consequently they are there in the sun and might be identified with it, just as other gods are really present in the image or symbol. And Vishnu's activity when he measures space can be displayed through the sun, wherefore he can be said to be seated in the sun. But he is not the sun. We therefore also hear that he has created the sun. But the conception of his three steps as rising into higher and higher spheres is not consistent with the movement of the sun, which first rises and afterwards goes down.

Other explanations are no more satisfactory. Vishnu has been explained as the lord of the wide plains or as the prototype of the soul, or rather as the soul of the principle of generation, etc. But none of these explanations can be naturally derived from what we know about Vishnu.

The root from which Vishnu is formed seems to be *vish,* to be active. His activity must have something to do with things which were of vital importance to the members of the Aryan society, to institutions and regulations which were believed to embody occult forces,—not such as are of use in war, but such as had to be scrupulously observed in daily life. And therefore his name is not so far mentioned in the Rigveda, which has been largely coloured by the conditions prevailing during the troublous times of the conquest of India. But he has evidently a greater place in the religious life of the people than can be judged from

the frequency of the mentioning of his name, and the germs were there from which the great god of later Hinduism was developed, —the protector of man and the guardian of established order, the god whom man loves,—while Siva is preëminently the divine being who is worshipped in fear and trembling.

Siva can also be traced back into the times of the Rigveda, where he is, however, usually called Rudra, *i.e.* probably the howler, wherefore he has sometimes been explained as a personification of the howling wind. The underlying idea is, however, much wider, and comprises everything which fills man's heart with terror and awe. His hue is horrible red, or bluish black, the colours of death and terror, and he haunts such places where man does not feel comfortable, cross-roads and cemeteries; he is met with in lonely places, in the hills or in the woods; and wherever man is struck with an inexplicable feeling of danger or fear. We hear of people living away from human society and giving themselves up to practices reminding us of the latter Yogins who drink poison with Rudra.

The denomination Siva is already met with in the Rigveda, and has a meaning which seems to be little suited to the character of the dread god. It means gracious, and Rudra seems to be anything but gracious. It is, however, comparatively easy to understand the use of such an application. A haughty tyrant is not rarely addressed as a gracious king. In such ways of talking to people whose evil temper we have reason to fear, we can still trace a mentality which is quite common with primitive people. The common attitude towards Rudra, however, is not one of trust and attachment. He is not invoked to come and help men, but to ward off the danger which is his proper sphere of action, and offerings are brought him in order to keep him at a distance. Though this is, at first sight, difficult to understand, Rudra or Siva thus later on became one of the chief gods of Hinduism.

There is also another consideration which should not be overlooked. There is a distinct tendency to avoid the use of the terrible god's name. It can even be said that Rudra is not, perhaps, a real name at all, but rather a descriptive appellation. He is similarly called *Ugra*, powerful; *Bhima*, terrible; *Isa*,

lord; *Mahadeva*, great god; and in the course of time the number of these designations increases. Some of them have probably been borrowed from local gods or demons, but all of them can be applied to the one great God Man in this way trains himself to see a unity behind all the different manifestations, to rise to the conception of one single power behind the changing complexity.

We now come to an old god, who may perhaps be an inheritance from the Indo-European period, in Pushan, whose name has been connected with the Greek Pan. He seems to be a personification of those forces which regulated the relations of the Aryan to his cattle. He knows every path and road, he follows the cattle and protects it and brings it safely home, and he is also able to recover what has been lost. In such circumstances it is not to wondered at that he was thought to exercise his activity through the sun, and his name is often used for the sun. But we have already seen how little we can in reality attach to such an image. Everything which we hear about Pushan points to the conclusion that he belongs to a period when the raising and tending of cattle was of primary importance in the life of the Aryan, and we understand why his worship declined when agriculture became the chief occupation of the people.

Amongst the oldest Vedic gods we must further reckon the Asvins, a divine couple who seem to be related to the Dioskouroi of the Greeks. In both cases we have to do with two gods, who are considered as twins and the sons of Dyaus (Greek *Zeus*) and are intimately connected with a female deity who evidently has something to do with the sun: Surya in India and Helena in Greece. The two pairs are further of a similar nature in both traditions; they help man in danger and peril, and especially on the sea. As we have similar traditions preserved by another Indo-European people, the Lets, there cannot be any doubt that the fundamental conception dates back into the Indo-European period.

If we now want to understand the nature of the divine twins, it is of little use to turn to their names. We have no other means of understanding the nature of the Asvins than to examine

their features as they are represented by tradition. And then we find that they are throughout conceived as saviours and helpers in misfortune and danger, and especially on the sea. Professor Gildner has therefore explained them as saints who are invoked in times of need. They are further divine physicians and surgeons, who heal from disease, make the blind see and the lame walk. They can make the old man young, they provide a husband for the old spinster and they gradually become the typical best men to the bride. On the whole, healing, restoration and saving are the outstanding features in their physiognomy, and we must try to explain them from that point of view.

They were, as the other gods, primeval forces, viewed in the likeness of men in accordance with the common tendency to look on everything in the universe, even forces and ideas, as filled with life and individuality. *Puramdhi,* the swelling fullness; *aditi,* limitlessness; *nirriti,* destruction; were active self-working entities, as well as *kâma,* craving; *manyu,* anger, or the "gatherer" or "heaper" at work when the harvest was brought in. There is nothing of Nature or Sun-worship in all this. The forces and potencies which were at work in everyday life were of greater consequence for man than the sun, the moon or the stars : religion begins on earth and not in the skies.

It makes little difference whether the personal colouring is distinctly apparent or not. Where everything is looked on as filled with life, there is no essential difference between personal or impersonal power. In my own country the common people tell us that "he" blows, or rains or snows. This "he" is more vivid than the "it" of the educated classes and more akin to the Indo-Europen notion, according to which all such occurrences are due to self-exciting forces, which their activity are naturally conceived in personal or half-personal shape.

A similar result ensued when the eye dwelt on the relationship existing between the original potency and its manifestation. The former would easily be conceived not only as a cause but also as an agent, because an agent could so often, in common life, be detected behind the activity. We have already made the aquaintance of some such half-personal agents, the lord of the field, *kshetrasyapati,* the lord of the dwelling,

the lord of the field, *kshetrasyapati;* the lord of the dwelling, *vástoshpati, etc.*

Still more individuality seems to be felt behind the name *Prajápati,* the lord of progeny, who makes the offspring of the Aryan numerous and also fertilizes the cattle. He gradually come to be considered as the lord of creation and preservation, partly under the influence of ancient notions about some primeval creator behind creation. But he never seems to have become a really living god and always retains traces of a more or less theoretical origin. In this respect he resembles another creation of theoretical reasoning; *Brihaspati* or *Brahmanaspati,* the vague personality seen behind the sacred spell or incantation.

Such personifications had, however, little of actual reality about them, and could only with difficulty be crystalized into real gods. The potency or energy for which they stood was the principal thing, and not the agent. It is therefore no matter for wonder when we find more than one name given to the creative force. We hear about a *Visvakarmá,* the "all doer", and about a *Dhátri,* whose name simply mean "creator", and so forth.

Where such agents come to play a certain rôle in popular imagination, their activity becomes the object, as we have seen, of traditional tales, and they receive a more pronounced personal colouring. Such has been the case with *Tvashtri,* the carpenter or joiner, who fashions Indra's thunderbolt and other marvellous objects, even the embryo in the womb.

When such an agent gets a wider scope of action, he may develop into a real god. Such seems to have been the case with *Savitri,* the instigator, who is at work wherever some force is manifest. He rouses man to his day's work; he causes the sun to begin his daily course, he pushes the night into existence, in short he is, as an ancient commentator says, *sarvasya prasavitri,* he who urges everything forward. He may enter the sun and work through the sun, and so is often said to *be* the sun. We are however already prepared to understand such ideas, which do not indicate that *Savitri* is an old sun-god.

It is necessary to repeat that in such divine agents there is nothing which can properly be called nature-worship. The

underlying notion is throughout that of force and energy. But such powers and energy-substances were of course also to be found in nature. They were present in the sun, and as their receptacle Surya, the sun, is frequently praised. But it is only in later times that Surya seems to become a real god. In the Rigveda he is just as often created by some other god, and the natural background is always apparent. Similar is the case with *Ushas,* the dawn. In the hymns praising her we often also observe the fine feeling of beauty which constitutes one of the chief charms in Indian poetry. But she as well as Surya are much more the objects of marvel and wonder than of worship, though there is a distinct religious element in the praise bestowed on them; their strict observance of law and order becomes an example for man.

The powers and forces manifested in nature and the skies were, as we have seen, clearly recognised. But they were of less importance than those energy-substances which framed man's destiny in daily life. Some of them might become more important on certain occasions. Thus *Váyu,* the blower, or *Váta,* the wind; *Parjanya,* the rainer; *Apas,* the waters; are hymned and praised. But at the bottom we always see the conception of power, and not simply the natural phenomenon.

Some forces were of special importance for certain classes and castes, and they were then especially worshipped by them. In the Rigveda we are preëminently faced with the class-gods of the priests and those who were active at the sacrifice: *Agni,* the fire, which received the offerings and carried them up to the gods, and *Soma,* the invigorating and intoxicating drink which the gods liked, just as Aryans themselves were fond of it. The moon's decrease was mythologically explained by the assumption that it was the *soma* imbibed by the gods, and later on *Soma* became a common designation of the moon. But also here we can throughout discern the original conception.

On the whole we can thus reaffirm that the religious mentality in the Rigvedic period was essentially the old Indo-European one: a belief in higher forces, which man could not control, and a worship of those forces and of the vague personal-

ities displaying them. And behind them we can still trace a more universal force, the idea of eternal reality, *rita,* which filled all the forces and agents and raised them above the realm of man.

Whenever the limits within such an agent, or the primeval force for which he stood, were removed, the necessary conditions were given for the development of mighty gods. Such was the the case with the Aryan gods, Mitra and Varuna, and such was even more the case with Indra, the ancient demon of uncontrollable strength and vigour. In the troublous times of war and battles, strength and vigour were prominent everywhere, and their representative Indra was bound to loom large in the imagination of the Vedic Aryans.

We can accordingly sum up the religious mentality of Rigvedic times as follows: the ancient Indo-European framework was still there, with its belief in self-existing forces and powers, which were usually viewed in personal or half-personal shape. But from this background great gods had risen or were rising, the heavenly counterparts of the powerful rulers on earth, with power to assert themselves against overwhelming odds and even to satisfy their wishes and realise their will in spite of all obstacles, against every universal law.

THE BREAK UP OF THE QUADRUPLE EMPIRE.

By KSHIROD-CHANDRA SEN.

Good cometh out of evil. Hate is the mother of love; co-operation is the offspring of competition; poverty is the cause of prosperity; civilisation shows maximum vigour where Nature is most unyielding and even cruel. Human life is the meeting ground of opposites, and the problem of life is how to eliminate one of them, and permanently adhere to the other.

Social evolution is a process and product of differentiation combined with an integrative purpose. The best result is obtained when the purpose starts the process, and runs through it to the end, keeping pace with it while controlling its progress. Where the strong undercurrent of purpose runs faster than the process, or weakly lags behind it, the result is unsatisfactory; because in the first case it creates hindrances, retarding progress; and in the second, it fails to provide safeguards against the incursions of anarchical tendencies. The process produces *many* out of *one,* while the purpose keeps the resulting many bound up into a unity.

By normal evolution, then, society grows in complexity without losing its one-ness. The whole acquires new strength and vivacity by the differentiation of its parts, by change from likeness to unlikeness, because mutual helpfulness and adequate interdependence is maintained between them. The parts are by nature self-assertive, and characterised by a love of liberty and independence, but the whole manages them adroitly so as to keep them united by an enlightened egoism. The whole is thus sustained in progressive vigour and order, while the parts gain not only in destructive individuality, but also in efficient vitality. And this running equilibrium is kept up by the interplay of Nature and Reason.

The desire for happiness being the driving power, social progress implies the harmonious development of Nature—self-assertion and immediate pleasure—on the one hand, and of

Reason—foresight and permanent happiness—on the other. The egoistic love of life lies at the bottom of the whole process, sweetened and softened by the artistic beauty of altruism slowly and surely developing itself to cover the growing shame of barbaric selfishness. Social decadence begins when the harmony shows weakness ; when the equilibrium between the driving power of Nature and the guiding power of Reason is disturbed; when Nature insists on cash payment while Reason insists on a moratorium.

In the conflict between capitalism and communism in the civilised countries of the West at the present day, the clamour for cash is obstreperous on both sides, and the State, as representing the organism of society, having lost the guiding power of Reason, is unable successfully to impress upon either party the true value of the credit system on which civilisation has so far stood. The harmony of development has been lost according to some statesmen; the true harmony of development is trying to displace the false harmony of ages, according to others. Economic communalism now divides entire nations, every man enlisting himself on one or the other side. The complete defeat of orthodoxy will lead either to rebarbarisation, or to a new and higher form of civilisation; but the latter can only come by the complete abrogation of the root principle of communalism, *viz.*, the principle of egoism devoid of reinforcement by Reason.

When the driving force of Nature assumes a contemptuous attitude towards the guiding influence of Reason, society suffers from communalism, which is but a wider form of personalism. Its integrative power has then lost vigour, and the differentiative preocess is working without due control. When Reason, on the other hand, becomes meticulous, society loses in virility, and stagnation follows in the name of stability; that is to say, when reason loses its reasonableness, disaster stares society in the face.

Stability means static equilibrium, while society needs a moving equilibrium,—a dynamic balancing of the opposite forces of Nature and Reason. The predominance of either is destructive of civilisation. War issues out of the preponderance of Nature, and the peace of Nirvana slowly creeps in with the

undue preponderance of Reason. Stability brings with it the sleep of peace, vampire-like, by sucking the blood out of the heart of the social organism. It is as injurious to social development as the standing bicycle is to the equipoise of the cyclist.

Dr. Rabindranath Tagore, in the last number of this Quarterly, has dwelt on the conflict between Nature and Reason, in his inimitable style, in dealing with the degeneration of the holy institution of marriage in India, with an indirect reference to the spirit of feminism, now so rampant all over the world. Anybody desiring to understand the true conditions of combined social stability and progress, cannot do better than carefully study this essay on the *Indian Ideal of Marriage,* which though it directly deals with the institution of marriage only, is pregnant with gifts of truth on social questions of a much wider range.

The conflict between the activities of Nature and Reason is variously designated by philosophers. Huxley distinguishes between the cosmic and the ethical process. Professor Wundt contrasts them as Nature and Culture, Dr. Annie Besant as Nature and Nurture. The discrimination generally intended to be made is that suggested by the terms Nature and Art. Dr. Tagore has used the words *Life* and *Mind* to bring in the conception of the five *Kôshas* of the Hindu philosophy to bear upon the problem of social progress in general, and of the evolution of married life in particular.

The next stage of progress is indicated by Dr. Tagore as *spiritual* with much hesitancy, for he finds that word lacking in definitiveness, while there exists no other expression in the English language precisely corresponding to what is known as the *Jñànamaya Kôsha* in Hindu philosophy. It may be simply called, to avoid possible controversy, the super-social state,—in which Dr. Tagore anticipates that Woman will shake off her present subjection, and in which man may reasonably expect to acquire a higher freedom and a closer communion with the Supreme without losing the advantages of social life as it now exists within the ramparts of restraints built by Reason or Art,—a state in which Love will more definitely preponderate over

hate, peace over war, true knowledge over illusion, the kingdom of God over that of the Devil. Dr. Tagore's creative predilections impel him to ask Woman to adhere to her cult of preservation, instead of desperately engaging in adventurous persuits likely to lead her into conflict with her own inner nature. But his theory of social progress does not lose a particle of its value because women may or may not admit the absolute wisdom of his exhortation to them, or comply with it in practice.

Destruction is not so redundant or hateful as we generally suppose, and the supersocial or the *spiritual* state may possibly be preceded by what we may designate *destructive,* as contrasted with *creative* processes. To the optimist, the destructive contest between man and woman, between men and men, between capital and labour, between rulers and ruled, between ascendant and subject races, seem to be the prelude to a higher state of human existence. After all, social progress is the product of the combat between Nature and Art, between Natural Right and Vested Interest.

Whatever peace the world has seen has been attained through war. But war does not necessarily imply the use of gun-powder and gas. Evil must be resisted, whether passively or actively, by the power of self-sacrifice reducing the aggressor to shame,or by the power of self-assertion arousing fear in the heart of the latter,—in either case bringing him to reason. Aggression and counter-aggression of muscles and intelligences (called cunning in anthropology) constitute life and social progress, in the form of a combined process of immediate destruction and ultimate creation. Nature never dies in the heart of either man or woman. She may be kept in subjection by Reason ; but when Reason itself revolts against the existing order, Nature may well be unchained for assisting in amelioration.

Reason or the "Mind" is not an absolutely fixed entity. It is subject to fluctuations in its general progress. In the higher planes of its existence it may suggest passive resistance, —such as the Hindus of Java availed of in order to avert subjection to the Dutch, whose Nature ultimately recoiled from the destruction of these innocent people unwaveringly exposing

themselves to gun-fire and sword-cuts for the sake of political freedom. In lower planes it may suggest more active opposition. In either case, creation is impossible without destruction, as morning is impossible without midnight. The new moon is the precursor of the full moon.

With this preliminary disquisition, I pass from Feminism to Communalism in general.

In societies developed on normal lines, communalism springs out of aberrations in the course of development, and represents a re-awakening of self-consciousness in sections of society subjected to undue subordination ultimately detrimental not merely to those sections but to the entire organism. The resulting revolt, being met by opposition, emerges as a conflict between two sections of society under the special name of Communalism.

The quadruple empire, ordinarily known as the social organisation, *viz.*, the empire (1) of man over woman, (2) of the minority over the majority, (3) of race over race, and (4) of the magnified man over the natural man, is at this moment tottering to its foundation, being simultaneously attacked in all four aspects.

This Quadruple Empire, which still possesses a beautifully creative *tout ensemble,* was built up by man in his youth, with an undeveloped intellect which has waged a protracted warfare with Nature, growing in power with the expansion of its conquests over its adversary, which resisted it, from within and without, at every point and at every stage of its progress. The subjection of the inner nature sometimes involved tyranny over it. Gradually the pressure of this tyranny, which was general and diffuse at first, became unequally distributed,—some parts of society being subjected to greater suffering than their correlated parts,—and the tyranny over Nature assumed the complexion of tyranny of one section of society over another, by the captivity and corruption of Reason and the establishment of the Devil's right known as vested interest. Thus arose the distinction between the rich and the poor; the capitalist and the labourer; the comfortable parasite and the miserable worker.

The sufferers themselves were so subtly manipulated, specially by their fear of the magnified man, that they lost self-consciousness, and submitted to their condition as complacently as if it were imposed upon them by Nature herself, and not by selfish human Art. In the further progress of the tyranny, the very efficiency of its evasiveness revived after long ages, as a by-product, the dormant self-consciousness of the suffering majority. This self-consciousness has been developing and expanding with an ever accelerating force, and has attained its maximum vigour during the last half-century. It has all along thriven by self-assertion; while vested interest, which visibly felt the pressure and humiliation of defeat a century and a half ago, is now well-nigh routed and compelled to retreat in disorder.

Vested interest began to experience reverses long ago, but they were slow and discontinuous. Thus slaves have been raised into serfs; serfs into villeins; villeins into yeomen; yeomen into gentlemen; and now constitutional resistance is being supplemented by threat of direct action. The final triumph of the suffering majority is only a question of time. In the Western countries, where the development of society has generally proceeded on normal lines, the chief form of communalism is the economic one, commonly known as syndicalism, which divides society into capitalism and communism as the extreme forms of the inherant opposition, with medial forms of divers gradations.

Other types of communalism, after having disturbed society for several centuries, have now all but disappeared from the West. One of them for example is the communalism of religion, or rather superstition. The communalism of Catholics and Protestants, having made a tremendous noise in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, declined in virulence towards the close of the eighteenth, chiefly through the influence of the physiocrats of France, and is now all but silenced by the power of science. Bigotry grave way to tolerance, and tolerance implies the decline of *aberglaube* (*extra-belief*), belief in what is beyond the verifiable, and the disappearance of

Extra-belief has turned human attention to matters of greater interest in practical life; so that the separatist force of religion is now all but dead in the land of agnostic Christianity, which was once so proud of its gnosticism.

Culture has thus killed religious communalism in the civilized West. Is it too much to expect that it will likewise kill it in the East? Philosophers abandoned *aberglaube* in ancient India, but priests asd capitalists and militarist statesmen encouraged Extra-beliefs among the masses for the protection of the Quardruple Empire, and for purposes of exploitation. The dismemberment of this ancient empire is the necessary pre-requisite of the disappearance of Communalism from human society.

Lord Bryce ennumerated four types of Communalism (Hindrances of good Citizenship) thus:

> There have been strifes of different races, or class-groups within the same state. There have been quarrels of religion. There have been struggles over political power between those who held it as their exclusive possession and those who sought to be admitted to share it. There have been struggles between different economic classes in which the poorer strove to improve by legislation their material condition... The three former kinds of conflict have almost passed away from west and middle-European countries with the cooling of religious passion and the democratization of nearly all the states. There remain only conflicts of the fourth kind, which turn upon material conditions, and which tend to become struggles between the richer and the poorer classes. The efforts of the latter to better their lot in the world have often caused, and sometimes justified, revolutions, and several long steps in human progress have been marked by their success.

To put it more succintly and completely, maladministration of the Quadruple Empire leads to revolt, and to Communalism primarily of four kinds, namely, sexual, political, religious and economic. Lord Bryce makes no mention of sexual communalism, and, from the indirect brief reference to it made by Dr. Tagore, it might seem as if he thought of it as a thing by itself, an uncorrelated element in social Morphology.

Sexual communalism can terminate only by the unification of the sexes, not by the survival of the fittest. The only question is, what form the union should take, or in other words what modifications should be introduced into the institution of marriage as regards duration and co-ordination. Feminism cannot fight to a finish without finishing the race. Peace is bound to come. The only question is, when it will come. Dr. Tagore thinks it will arrive with the metamorphosis of the social into the *spiritual,* or what I call the supersocial state in contrast with the social, which has itself evolved out of the pre-social state.

But can Woman, with advantage, wait in the torment of inaction till the advent of that higher stage, the stage of *Jñána,* as contrasted with the stage of *Mind,* which has evolved out of the stage of *Life,* which itself presupposes the stage of *Anna*? Can she contentedly adhere to the cult of preservation,—the preservation of the vested interest of man, who has reduced her to abject subjection, and is bent upon keeping her where she is? Woman may never succeed in competing with man in the common activities of the sexes, or in the conventional "special sphere" of man, but man himself has goaded her to engage in such "desperate adventurous pursuits," by bringing her into "conflict with her own inner nature."

The poet is so deeply absorbed in enjoying the beauty of *Creation* that he is shy of the occasional intrusive presence of the philosopher who thinks of destruction as a necessary correlate of this beauty.

Economic communalism, also, can only terminate by the unification of capital and labour, not by the survival of the fittest; for such survival would mean the extinction either of capital or of labour, both of which are essential for the production of wealth *i.e.* of the means of subsistence. The only question is, again, what form the union will take.

As monogamy for life is the extreme form of union for the extinction of sexual communalism, so is the coalescence of capital and labour in the same hands the extreme form of union for the termination of economic communalism. Both have been tried and

found wanting. So, either some new form must be devised as a compromise, or the problem left to drift in the stream of Nature. Trades Unionism has rendered pure and complete separation of capital and labour inefficacious for purposes of industrial production. It represents the revolt of labour against capital. Labour has suffered long at the hands of capital and its efforts have been systematically silenced by propaganda of the worship of the iron law of wages; on the other hand retaliation is at this moment being carried to extremes, the old superstition having knocked on the head. Both sides have lost balance of mind, and disaster stares both in the face.

The whole social organism is trembling for very life,—the combat between vested interest and natural right betraying the weaknesses of the existing order in a most melancholy fashion. The contest is not so much between wealth and poverty, as Lord Bryce would make out in the passage quoted before, as between desire for inequality and desire for equality. The condition of the working classes has largely improved during the last half century, but inequality of possessions has increased instead of decreasing; and the higher the standard of living rises among the latter, the stronger grows their desire for equality; and the stronger the desire for equality the greater becomes the actual difference of comforts and possessions.

The clearest example of racial Communalism is in the United States of America, where ten million blacks, mixed up with one hundred and fifty million whites, shew no tendency to declining population. The law of the survival of the fittest has there no visible manifestation, while the law of union in blood and spirit shows no progress. Mulattoes and quadroons, who once gave promise of an increasing whiteness by the process of negro-breeding carried on by whitemen,—in order to keep up the slave-stock biologically when it was dwindling commercially by the operation of the British policy of abolition of the slave trade,—are now relapsing towards pure negro blood by the force of emancipation effected by the civil war of 1861-65. The amalgamators have lost their lucrative vocation, and "Virginia, one of its leading industries" (*Abraham Lincoln's last speech*).

The communal problem is deeply engaging the attention of statesmen in the United States who advocate toleration, in contrast with their less cultured fellow citizens who are inclined to press for the annihilation or repatriation, or failing either, the re-enslavement of the negro. Both sections of Americans are Christian by religion, at least in name. The law of love and brotherhood, preached by the Founder, has nowhere in the world received more contemptuous disregard among the followers of Christ. As Annie Besant might say: "Nature is stronger than Nurture". The skin belongs to Nature, the heart to Nurture. Charles Lamb described the negroes, with due respect for the book of Genesis, as images of God cut in ebony, and produced the most delicious blend of humour and blasphemy for the delectation of the literary world in Christendom. The dissolution of the United States will precede the solution of the Communal problem here adverted to, unless Ku Klux Klanism should disappear by the power of some magic in the meanwhile.

The clearest example of religious Communalism is presented by Syria and Palestine to-day. Here Judaism, Islam and Christianity, all having a common origin, are maintaining a triangular contest for predominance. Here *aberglaube* preponderates over the central belief of religion. "The Eternal that makes for righteousness" yields to the ephemeral that leads along the broad road to its terminal palace. Culture is at its lowest ebb, and the mandatory powers follow the cult of the preservation of their own avaricious interests.

India presents a most confused *mélée* of Communalism in every one of its varieties,—sexual, economic, political, racial and religious. At present the religious type is most painfully prominent, specially as it hampers the political contest between the small ruling section and the numerically larger ruled, because it hinders the progress of nascent Nationalism, which in a country under foreign domination primarily means political communalism. There is no *rapprochment* between Hindus and Mussalmans, or between these and Christians.

Economic Communalism, is emerging into sight in the centres of Indian industry, and is threatening to strangle the latter in its very babyhood. Foreign trades-unionism is fanning

the flame of the communal fire and the imperial state, which owes its origin to rank communalism and maintains itself by the power derived from the weakness due to the same, is not interested in bringing the fire-brigade to bear upon the spreading conflagration.

Such origin of this imperial domination is admitted by the ruling caste; but, as a civilised people, they feel ashamed to aver in so many words that the continuance of religious and other types of communalism is good for the country because necessary for their own domination. The sincerity of their disavowals is, however, suspected, and wherever any communal upheaval takes place, the cultured portion of society is not prevented by scruples of conscience from ascribing it to covert Bureaucratic influence. The plain truth is, that Government in India growingly finds itself in a tight place in reconciling practice with profession, in allowing Truth to appear in public without his spouse, Beauty, or his concubine, Insincerity.

I am afraid I have already exceeded the limit of space, and shall conclude by pointing out that the existing social organization, being founded primarily upon egoism, and so far maintained by enlightened self-interest without the aid of true inner moral elevation,—and communalism being a necessary corollary of egoism,—the foundation of the structure of society must be changed in order to free it from the tyranny of Communalism. This can only come by the advent of what Dr. Tagore calls the "Spiritual State", in which competitive co-operation will make room for co-operation based upon the conviction that all men are born free and equal, that the image of God was not separately cut in ebony and oak, but in one universal substance, imbued with the Divine Spirit.

COME MY LOVER.

Come my lover, in thy lavish splendour,
Hurt the wind with shock of thy arrival.
No more secret meetings in uncertain
Gleams of twilight ; let thy burning torches
Toss through midnight their tumultuous laughter.
Grasp me by my right hand ; ah, secure me
From all trivial ties of clinging moments,—
Coils of sluggish dreams ; and let all sleepers
Wake and come, and see me glad and helpless,
Held in might of thy majestic silence.

RABINDRANATH.

"CALLS FROM THE EAST."

By Prof. Fernand Benoit.

The *Cahiers du Mois,* a monthly publication started last year by the Paris publisher Emile-Paul, instead of the usual bunch of poems, stories and essays produced by other periodicals, brings out, under the direction of F. and A. Berge, connected sets of notes or studies, on themes proposed by the Editors, contributed by various writers from their respective points of view. The interest of this sort of collective interview by correspondence lies in the variety, the contrast, of the views thus brought together, which nevertheless form a harmonious whole.

The subject matter of the enquiry, which will occupy us to-day, and whose results appeared in the last number, No. 9/10, of the *Cahiers du Mois,* under the title of "Calls from the East", consists of replies to five questions put by the Editors.

I do not know whether the East is actually calling out to the West, offering sympathy and inspiration. What is certain is, that an increasing number of individuals of the West, and sometimes even institutions, hear the voice of the East, dream ardently of the East as of a land of wisdom and bliss, where other modes of life, other disciplines of thought, and other religious experiments are carried on, which might serve to rescue them from their growing mental and spiritual perplexities. These calls are heard not only by idle dreamers, or amateurs of new sensations, dissatisfied with their own surroundings because they are not at peace with themselves, but frequently also by 'others'.

But I had better put before you the five items of the questionary sent by Messrs. Berge to some hundred members of the French cultivated class, and a few foreigners, mainly orientalists, philosophers, sociologists, men and women of letters, artists, critics, travellers, explorers. Till now the East has co-operated with the West in the same way as the sheep co-operates with the fleece-dealer and the butcher. These questions at least show that it is not in that aspect that our enquiry is considering this collaboration of the two worlds.

The questions were :—

1. Do you think that West and East are completely impenetrable to each other, or at least, to use Maeterlinck's phrase, that there are in the human brain an Occidental and an Oriental lobe, which have always mutually paralysed such effort?

2. If we are penetrable by Oriental influence, who are the interpreters—Germanic, Slavonic, Asiatic—through which this action seems to you to exercise itself most efficiently in France?

3. Are you, with M. Henri Massis, of opinion that this influence of the Orient could constitute for French thinking and arts a serious danger that we ought urgently to resist ; or do you think that the liquidation of the Mediterranean influence has set in, and, that we could, like Germany, try and find in the *Knowledge of the East** an enrichment of our own general culture and a renewal of our sensibility?

4. What is the field—art, letters, philosophy—in which this influence seems likely to give peculiarly fruitful results?

5. Which are, according to your feeling, the Western values that make for the supremacy of the West over the East ; or what are, in your opinion, the false values which belittle our Western civilisation?

It would be no easy task to expound and discuss, within the space of an article, the opinions developed in a volume of some four hundred pages. I shall therefore limit myself to delineating the general tendency of the views expressed, by typical quotations. The list of the contributors does not include the name of a single politician.

When the book fell into my hands I was prepared for a somewhat biassed handling of the topic. In no country, except perhaps Germany, have the cultivated classes been affected by the war as in France. Many who were counted, before the crisis, among the wide-minded have become exclusive. As for the exclusive—I am talking of the majority,—they did not lose such a chance of becoming narrow-minded.

The first two essays, contributed by two of the foremost French Orientalists, Emile Sénart and Sylvain Levi, rather confirmed my apprehensions. The tone of extreme reserve and caution adopted by these learned authors may be the best for

*Title of a book on the East by the poet, Paul Claudel.

scholars, attacking scholarly problems from a scholarly point of view; but it does not seem to me to be likely to facilitate a human understanding between the Eastern and Western worlds.

"Is it certain," asks Prof. Senart, "that the incessant penetration, ill-controlled by settled judgment, the growing invasion of Oriental life will not complicate the threatening unrest of the Western world?" That the intended enrichment of the one culture by means of imported elements of the other, has to be carried on with judiciousness and care is obvious. Everybody knows, for instance, how far the interested advances of the conciliatory missionary or the condescending statesman can be relied upon. Of little more avail are the rhapsodic outbursts of novelists in search of exotic sensations. But when the great Indologist asks: "Do you find that any one of the Eastern civilisations has to offer us any essential element that ours does not, or did not possess?" and adds: "I do not think our culture has any chance of vivifying it (the East) by the supply of its impaired elements"; concluding with: "It (our western civilisation) will find there new resources of adornment but I think, no ferments of renewal. In the case of French civilisation being threatened with collapse, no Oriental importation could avert the peril";—we cannot help thinking of the Western 'Renaissance',—of Europe's sudden revival under the stimulus of elements imported individually from the East,—and feel inclined to see in Prof. Sénart's reserves the perplexities of an overcautious specialist.

We shall now go on to the article signed by Prof. Sylvain Levi, the first of our Visiting Professors (he even inaugurated the Visva-bharati in December, 1921). He admits that "the mad pride of Europe, over-excited by a century of admirable inventions, pretends to impose its law on the rest of the world—the East, undermined in its beliefs, customs, institutions—the East which is trying to organise itself for defence.... And never has the earth borne so much hatred as in the time of the League of Nations. It is the genius (the evil genius) of Europe which is making the unity of Asia.... Therefore what is the good of talking about dosing influences by the drop-tube and the phial? We have either to understand one another, or throttle

one another! Understand one another? But how? By universal love? The recipe is simple but its formula is pregnant with many a surprise... The bleating of the sheep does not close the gate of the slaughter-house." Such is the general tone of Levi's answers. As for the unnecessary personal emphasis laid on the name of our Founder-Acharya who, complains the Professor, "by denouncing to his countrymen, to China and to Japan, the faults and crimes of the West, and by setting up, in contrast, an Orient of his own imagination, does wrong to Asia, Europe and his own ideals,"—a fit appreciation of this complaint would carry us into considerations which have little to do with either scholarship, history, literature, or the present debate, and we had better let it pass.

Before I go over to the authors who agree in seeing great possibilities in the Eastern influence, which is not only now at work in our lives, but has been working in the West from the early days of History, affecting European culture to the depths of its vitality, I shall give one more discordant note, by indicating the views of M. Henri Massis, one of the publicists of the 'Action Francaise', who is referred to in the questionary. He does not want to "bring a suit against the spirit of the East", but desires to point out "a set of old Western errors which, in order to regain some freshness and reconquer their lost prestige, assume a false air of exotism, mystery, poetry, and appear before us in the garb of a second-hand Orientalism. It is in the West that we shall find the Idealogists who under the pretext of revealing Eastern ideas to us, betray the Occidental civilisation and their own vocation.... If, on the other hand, we consider the allies these traitors have recruited in the Orient, we shall find that almost all have been formed by occidental culture. Such men as Tagore, Okakura, Gandhi himself, Coomaraswamy [*Massis seems to know the last author so well that he repeatedly calls him Cooromaswamy*—F.B.] all have been students of Eastern universities. They continually quote our poets, philosophers, our own ideas—I mean our worst follies—in order to seduce us.... to drag us into their machinations which aim at our annihilation. ... The orientalism of these Asiatic propagandists is no less to be suspected than that of Keyserling, Herman Hesse, Bonsels,

or Romain Rolland.... Reciprocally, Orientals are cheated as to the real nature of the Western spirit (I mean the spirit which has made the moral unity of the West and remains the principle of its salvation). This spirit is either Catholic and Christian, or it is nothing but a heap of intellectual error and indefensible material interests." [*I am afraid the spirit of the West is rather too often uncatholic and unchristian.*—F.B.] "Is there, then, nothing in these 'Calls from Asia' that we could retain? If they have a worthy sense these appeals cannot but urge us to come back to our catholic spirituality....and it is in that light I understand Tagore when he tells us with his somewhat vague lyricism: 'Before all do not lose faith in your ideal....do not be pessimistic!" Then M. Massis goes on: "Vanquished peoples have too much interest in spreading over ailing Europe a catastrophic view of the Universe; it does not behove us to yield to the Spenglerian contagion which is only a form of German despondency....It is a lesson in traditionalism that the East is teaching the West....But too many signs show us that these pseudo-oriental doctrines....shall only revive the dissensions which raged in Europe since the Reformation, and that Asiaticism like the Germanism of past times is only the first harbinger of the Brabarians....Let us not wait therefore till the storm has made havoc of our civilisation to renounce the accomplices of that sort of Asiaticism."

But I have given too much space to views which strike these discordant notes—the notes of cautiousness, scepticism, mistrust and even indifference and prejudice—amidst the otherwise quasi-unison of interest, reverence and sympathy. If some four or five of these representatives of French culture are hostile or luke-warm to the "Calls from the East", the others who respond to them can be counted by the hundred. It would, therefore, be impossible to give a short summary even of the most significant of the latter, and we shall simply present, in a somewhat broken and aphoristic way, carefully selected passages from typical answers to the questionary. Let it be remembered, before I begin, that the majority of the writers concerned have not been to Asia and give their opinion with that reserve.

Leon Brunschvig of the *"Institute"*.

The Western man, the man according to Socrates and Descartes,—a type of which the West has provided, by the way, very few examples,—is the man who includes all mankind in his idea of intellectual reflection and moral unity. Nothing is more desirable for him than the knowledge of the Orient, of all the Orient with the almost infinite diversity of its epochs and civilisations..... "The Mediterranean values" which were predominant in Jerusalem, Byzantium, Rome, Cordova, successively, are of Asiatic origin and character. So that a return to the East would be an attempt to rejuvenate and renew, at least from outside, the Oriental fund of the said values, rather than to liquidate them.

*

Paul Valery.

From the standpoint of culture I do not think we can have much to fear just now from Oriental influence. It is not a new thing for us. It has given us all the beginnings of our arts and knowledge.

*

André Gide.

Desirable or not, the contact of these two civilisations is inevitable. They are destined to penetrate deeply into each other.... The Occident must not forget that its civilisation is not the only one.

*

Edmond Jaloux.

To tell you the truth I am always surprised to see that the defenders of this French spirit, of this our Occidental patrimony, have so little trust in themselves..... As for me, I think it possesses enough vigour, and can hardly admit of a culture that would enrich itself by means of refusals, or that certain elements it assimilated centuries ago could retain an eternal capacity for renewal and self-fecundation..... From Asia we ignore almost everything, its history, literature, philosophy..... But we must recognise that a very queer process is at work which we might call the 'dispiritualisation' of Europe..... The trust we had put in the machine is turning against us.....the inner man yields to the outer man ; the outer man himself delegates all his powers to an inert system of wheels and motors. A peculiar madness, born of the abuse of money and the abuse of needs, increases this moral disorder which will fatally drag Europe into the abyss. We might have thought that the war of 1914, whose real

cause lay in this increasing greed, would teach us a lesson and that, being in search of a remedy for his troubles, the European would not seek for it in their very aggravation. But, since the war, all the causes of disaster have increased.

If we consider the philosophy of the races of Asia in its general outlook, the first thing that will strike us is the importance it gives to the spiritual..... What these religions, Brahmanism, Buddhism, Confucianism, etc., have in common, is a deep belief in the inner man and the iuportance of his connection with the Divine..... The wisdom of these religions consisted precisely in not granting man all the satisfactions he craved for, and reminding him that he must rise in function of his spirit, not of his possessions..... But is there some danger in promoting the Eastern influence? For my own part, the only result I can conceive, as the outcome of a contact with the sages of Asia, is new enrichment..... Some say that this doctrine (Buddhism) finds its origin in the most terrible pessimism. Well, there is no pessimism in Buddhism in the sense we give to that word. It was Schopenhauer who manufactured pessimism out of the Buddhistic doctrine, because he was an Occidental.

Man does not live by bread alone, says the Gospel. But he does not live, either, by his needs, work, capital, ambition, power, his modifications of or relations with external nature. He lives, or must live, precisely on that something which Asiatic philosophy offers to him in progression. For the three-fourths of the men of this age, Christianity has been either a system of rites in which the majority of the adherents do not any longer see a deep meaning (Catholicism), or a regulation of the outer life without connection with the faith (Protestantism)..... We must not forget that Christianity is, speaking generally, an Oriental religion, already influenced by the Buddha ; it not only conquered Europe but introduced a superior civilisation into that continent..... The most vital part of Christianity is after all this teaching that originated in the East, and not what Roman legislators and their juridic genius superadded..... Since centuries of our history, the East has never ceased to send us, at more and more distant intervals, messages to recall us to a right and pure sense of life..... When we have to judge of all these things, we must not forget that Europe is gravely ill, ill from the very excess of her materialism..... We see now, after the great experiment of the Nineteenth Century, that man can hardly live without the Divine..... Whatever god is to be born or reborn, he

will not be able to exist without drawing a part of his strength from the teaching of Asia.

*

Jean Schlumberger.

The virtue of Europe is action, that of Asia contemplation. Europe has invented the autonomous individual, the man with co-ordinated ideas, insatiable in the conquest of the real world, but lukewarm with regard to the spiritual. She is so little fruitful in sympathy that she seems unable to produce a religious movement without the interference of some outer graft. Never till now have appeared so obviously the sterile fruits of a civilisation exclusively turned towards the domination of matter, and never before had the Oriental civilisations revealed themselves to us as our equals. The terrific folly of the war was necessary to make us acknowledge these two facts.....There is no hope that Asia will ever accept the positive values of the Christian world if, on her part, Europe does not recognise the Asiatic values. Such understanding can only be reciprocal ; it must be based on mutual respect.

*

Robert de Traz.

There is not only curiosity in the glances that we direct towards the East, but also anxiety,—the anxiety of people who feel at one and the same time both crammed and impoverished,—crammed with ideas, inventions, technical progress ; and improverished by the terrible modern deterioration.

*

Philippe Soupault.

We shall never be able to judge the West. We shall either be too severe or too indulgent. What we can confess with certitude needs no commentary : the disastrous result of its influence. All the present unrest comes from the supremacy of this European spirit.....This immense, this prodigious and unqualifiable vanity (of ours) is the insuperable barrier set up between East and West. It is no wonder therefore that the recent years, which were for us years of humiliation and taught us the weakness and wretchedness of Western civilisation, were also years when certain Westerners turned towards the East. Like a great sick body Europe has been turning on her couch, calling for help ; she wants for her weakened, demoralised spirit, a light.

*

Jean Caves.

But is really the influence of Asia so pernicious and its charm so poisonous?.....The truth is, that Amiel and Schopenhauer have deformed some of the Hindoo ideas..... Amiel has understood nothing of the Indian thought and his example proves nothing.....India never preached discouragement and pessimism....."It is not action that we must renounce, but the fruit of action!" Says Krishna. "Tear out that poisoned arrow, *indolence,*" says Buddha. *Nirvána* is for them (Schopenhauer, etc.) nothingness, *i.e.*, all that is most frightful for us even when we despair. Now, *Nirvána* never meant anything of the kind, as everybody knows or ought to know..... In the midst of this intellectual nihilism in which we struggle since the war, the knowledge of this Oriental wisdom will perhaps bring back to some of us the serenity which seemed to have been lost for ever.

*

René Crevel.

I am surprised to see that the dabblers in "peril" should have selected an Oriental one..... The real peril comes from America, together with the manias for speed, drinks, gramophones. The peril does not come from the East!

*

André Desson, André Harlaire.

From different parts we hear voices asserting the existence of labels of value either strictly Occidental or strictly Oriental. Greco-Latin influences and the renaissance had put us under the spell of the so-called 'Mediterranean values'.....to-day we have attained European values..... are we not on the way towards universal values?

*

Gabriel Audisio.

The influence of Asia, if it were to become predominant in our land, should be realised through a strong personality, both literary and social, like Tolstoi..... This prophet,—is it going to be Tagore? His spell is powerful. If, on the one hand, he judges the West severely, on the other he does not shrink from collaborating with it.—Or is it to be Mahatma Gandhi? But Gandhi does not directly act upon us; and, introduced by Romain Rolland, he still remains an object of curiosity. This hostility of the two lobes of the brain imagined by Maeterlinck is but a poor image. The incompatibility of two fragments of mankind reduces itself, after all,

to the age-long struggle of two tendencies, idealism and utilitarianism..... Why should they not co-exist?..... Let us therefore accept, with an Oriental courtesy, these exchanges.

*

J. Bacot.

Those who know the men and countries of the East and the Far-East, both by culture and experience, are exceptions. Moreover, only to know is not to understand, for to understand these things you have to approach them with sympathy. The East has of us a much clearer idea,—not that these people are very keen on knowing us, but the Whites are much more penetrable..... The Whites are all one, and if they throttle one another it is because brothers who hate each other do so more thoroughly than strangers..... The Oriental people know quite well the evangelic teaching through the innumerable gospels which Anglo-saxon missionaries throw about among them like commercial prospectuses. Now they have seen that when two Christian nations get hold of each other's throat, they fight with such blind ferocity that each one accepts it as a duty to perish, provided that the other perishes too. Such an expression of animality is intolerable to the more ancient civilisations. In their own countries the Orientals have seen our missionaries of different nationalities separated by their political conflict, the pursuit of the same ideal being for them a weaker bond than distant debates about frontiers. Our outer activities are all the more unpleasant to the Oriental because they strike him as mere hypocrisy..... This curious sincerity of the West—which is after all only unconscious dishonesty—is for Asia extremely trying. There is more unconsciousness than duplicity in it, which makes it all the more disconcerting. What can you do with people who are convinced that they are looting you for your own benefit? From a close contact between the East and the West nothing can result but a threat for the East, without any hope of remedy for us. If we go on adding to our more and more efficient means of harming others, more and more powerful motives for doing so,—*e.g.*, the exaggerated feeling of Nationality, the sad European legacy of the French revolution,—then it is not impossible to believe that the White Race has in consequence of an organic law, undertaken its own destruction. And it is sure that from a certain standpoint, that of the coloured races, it could not possibly do anything better. That would spare them the trouble of modifying their teachings in order to resist ours.

An attentive study of the Orient as it was till now—not of to-day's

Orient as we have contaminated it—would soothe our agitation and thus our morbid irritability between nation and nation. As long as an ideal has not as an object the control of all the passions whatever they be, without any reserve, or compromise with any individual or collective egoism, morals must be relative and subordinate to more intense interests, and material progress can end only in the destruction of men and things... The impulsive European acts much and thinks little. Most often the statesman has just time to pass from one course of action to another ; he leaves it to the historian to think for him after he has acted. This is the reason why history is in such favour in the West....."To do anything rather than not to act!"—this anything is most often irreparable. This method when generalised leads to an efficient irresponsibility .....I am convinced that we can understand antiquity only through the Oriental channel..... There are no more critical minds than the Oriental ones, but they are critical in a sense different from ours. Our analysis is a decomposition into elements or parts. Their's a research for knowledge of the essential and objective nature of things, which does not make a quantitative but a qualitative distinction. In the field of letters, it is still too early for a direct influence from one literature to another. It is in philosophy that the Oriental influence could mostly modify our habits of mind.....The relative immutability of the East is a sufficient presumption of its wisdom and equilibrium. One changes only when one is not satisfied. Our instability shows that we are only replacing one evil by another, since we never can stop at any moment of our evolution.

*

Serge Elisseev.

(Ex-Prof. of Oriental Languages, Petrograd University.)

The East is impenetrable to the West only for the man who deliberately refuses to get rid of certain ideas which, like armour, prevent him from bending to enter the low Japanese door or squat on the mat..... I regret that in the spiritual field, the philosophical and moral ideas of the Far-East exercise but such a superficial influence over us. The teaching of the great thinkers (and not of any random Indian whom enthusiastic theosophists put up as an enlightened *Yogi*) could spiritually enrich the European soul. The habit of contemplation, if only for five minutes a day, would make for more mental concentration and strengthen our will by lessening our nervousness which makes us very unstable and prevents the formation of great character, a thing which is getting rarer and rarer in Europe..... In the course of its history the European civilisation has

lost most of its spiritual values. It can no longer recover them, though it still realises their necessity. For the best of men cannot exist simply on the ideal of 'efficiency of work' in the American way. In the condition in which the West finds itself, it is easier for us to go and search for truths in the East, than to come back to the few values we have left in the course of the development of our civilisation.

*

Azuan Mammeri

(A well-known Tunisian painter).

Can de deny to-day the influence of the East over all the European Middle-age? While the crusaders were fighting their religious opponents, were they not struck by admiration for a civilisation they had ignored till then?..... The Western brain brought in contact with it certainly did not lose anything.....It is not because the East has undergone a long decay that one can deny the impulse it gave to human progress..... There is in every man a desire for learning, understanding, expression..... This need manifests itself with ampleness in generous minds, with narrowness in mean minds. But what do we see to-day? A kind of intellectual selfishness even in cultivated minds. This comes mainly from the assumed superiority of Europe. Does the West really show superiority over the East? The European is active, laborious, orderly..... during centuries he has studied the conditions of comfort in the most variegated ways and has won for himself most important commodities..... But it seems that the great moral ideas have taken birth in the East, the cradle of religions.....Their family and society are more firmly constituted..... Be it Hindu, Buddhist, Mussalman, the Oriental community is calm, active without force, patriarchal, sometimes indolent, but helpful, devoted, hospitable and generous. Acts of violence are repugnant to them. The latest Oriental revolutionaries are only the consequences of Occidental influences over the people among whom they occurred.

*

Grevais Courtellemont.

The voluptuous Greek mythology is but a very poor (and how unmoral) reflexion of the metaphysics of India and Egypt..... Ceylon was illuminated by its new Buddhist efflorescence..... In Spain the Arabic civilisation, heir to the Greek, was ascending.....Was that not all Orient?

And had it not taken up the torch of civilization at a time when Europe was yet in the barbarous stage?..... Then the Crusades ;.....on the side of Europe was then all barbarity, on that of the East, civilisation and beauty. The clash was atrocious.....the East shed tears of blood,..... the West polished and enriched itself. But from that day a mutual misunderstanding started. India first learned to know the West through the pirates on her coasts ; China and Japan from sea-robbers and plunderers. The sinister exploits of the Spanish *conquistadores* in the two Americas, the European colonial ambitions which continued to grow,—all this changed the mistrust of the East into hatred and contempt..... Of all this the West itself would realise but little, were it not for such men as Funck-Brentano, Loti, Farrere and Grousset, who have led stress on the nobleness of feeling and purity of thought of these (Eastern) men, so long calumniated by such men as Barres, Louis Bertrand and so many other infatuated fools of the school of Gobineau and others.

The Mediterranean liquidation has begun..... Europe listens to the voice of Tagore..... When the misunderstanding which still separates us from the Orient has vanished, these men will open their hearts to us as we shall open our arms to them. This is what we must realise, and not the insane West. It can become a benefit by making us conscious of the great feverishness of our life, by bringing us back to the joy of living. After Loti, etc., others will follow who will tell us of the new consciousness of Japan, the awakening of China, the resurrection of Turkey, the final liberation of Egypt and that of India which is to follow..... Animated with the same desire of fusion, concord, harmony, East and West will not be long in uniting in the feeling of brotherhood which should always have existed between them. "Dream ! Utopia !"—the sceptic will exclaim. Not at all ! The whole world is moving rapidly towards this 'Union of the Peoples' which will be the salvation of mankind. An era of greater social justice opens everywhere on the globe. A dawn is breaking. And the warm sun of the East which begets so many wonders will shine again on this new day. The East which watched the birth of the first civilisations, which was the cradle of the great religions of mankind, will soon become the necessary counterpart of our too exclusively technical civilisation, by making us recall the real moral values that so many false values have temporarily eclipsed amongst us.

This is all that Tagore says.

* *

The reader may have by this time grown tired of such a long series of variations on the same tune. Still we shall go on with them for a while, because we realise the importance of such numerous and unanimous testimonies, collected from among the cultivated class of a nation whom we thought to be so deeply obsessed with its nationalism that its traditional sense of justice, its liberal traditions, seemed blurred. At a time when a Stoddard is promoting his wild theories of Nordic superiority, which find their immediate application in laws of exclusion, and seek to justify the unlimited colonial appetites, is it not of some interest to hear a non-negligible part of the *élite* of France proclaim their belief in the collaboration of races, the co-operation of cultures, and confess the shortcomings of their own patrimony? Such views might perhaps be gathered elsewhere (in Germany for instance) in equal proportion, and we do not reproduce them here to emphasise the magnanimity of the particular nation in question. It is rather to show that our Visva-bharati ideal is not quite unknown in Europe. If there are 'Calls from the East' there is also response from the West.

Dr. Allendy

The East had already strongly influenced the West at the time of the great Greek philosophers.....it is probable that its influence will again operate in the future..... In my opinion the most fruitful contact will be between India and the French elements that are more closely related to the Aryan stock, *i.e.*, the Celtic substratum of the nation whose psychological orientation, unlike the Latin one, has always been speculative..... I think that for philosophy and science there will be a return to the great general ideas in conformity with the intuitive metaphysics as personified in the East..... The force of the West is its intensive labour and its effort of material realisation, but it suffers from this prosaic tendency which is still darkened by a merciless struggle for life..... East and West can win much more by a more intimate frequentation, and I would like to see the study of Greek replaced in our colleges by that of Sanskrit.

*

Irving Babbit, U.S.A.

I do not think that Orient and Occident are impenetrable to one another ; they rather supplement each other. There are times when the

West needs Orientation in the liberal sense of the word. Our epoch is one of these. I mistrust the Germanic and Slavonic interpreters. The best interpreters are either Frenchmen who know the East by experience, or cultivated Orientals who have a sufficient knowledge of the Occident. The Oriental influence will be felt more in a very healthy way in the fields of religion and philosophy..... The special virtue of the East has always been the religious meditation..... This element has entirely disappeared from the West, leaving room for a more and more feverish agitation.....or has been confounded with the pantheistic dream..... The great superiority of the West lies in the field of natural sciences and in the material organisation of life. Unfortunately Science has been idolised.

*

Henri Barbusse

This penetration of spirit and culture of the two halves of the old world has already been often realised in the course of history..... It is always very advantageous for civilisations and states of mind to penetrate one another..... Mental and spiritual enrichment can be bought but at that price.

*

Victor Barrucand

I believe in the unity and the diversity of the human block..... Arts were only born in Europe through the influence of the East. If the French art and thinking could see in the Oriental influence a grave peril that has to be urgently removed, it would mean that they entertain such doubts about themselves and their own vitality that one could believe them to be more sickly than they are..... The West, which has been wrecked in its activism, will only recover calmness and the secret of happiness in a submission to the impulse of love. America is more threatening than Asia. Left to itself the West will tear itself widely, in spite of all morals and brotherhood, for progress is a war-machine which cannot be managed by fools. Man must govern the machine, not be governed by it.

*

Alice Barthou

(Wife of the late Premier).

The West means for me mist, cold, mechanism, murderous science, the factories with all the vices, the triumph of work, bustle, ugliness, materialism, utilitarianism, sterile agitation.....The East is calmness, peace, beauty, colour, mystery, charm, sunshine, joy, sweet life

and dream, in a word all the contrary of our hateful and grotesque civilisation..... If I were free I would get a Chinese wall to be built between the East and the West so as to prevent the former being poisoned by the latter.

*

Paul Bertrand

The West in all times received the vivifying influence of the East. Hellenism was for Rome an Oriental influence. So was Christianity. So was, in the middle age, the valuable Mahommedan influence..... The only superiority of the West was supplied by the Greeks,—it is Geometry. As for pseudo-values which belittle our civilisation it would require a volume to enumerate them. The strength of the Orient, of India specially, lies in the importance they assign to the religious problem.

*

Jean Buhot

(Of the "Association des Amis de l' Orient.")

The more I study the East the less I see it different from the West in all that is important and fundamental. From one country to another, only the prejudices differ. To assert that two parts of mankind shall never succeed in understanding each other, is to put our prejudices before common sense and a sincere search for truth, which of course many people do. ..... Our religion, worse than if it did not exist, is a partner in all our crimes. Our philanthropy is not sufficient to remove the suspicion of hypocrisy. It is not surprising at all that the West is despised for its ideals, shunned for its deeds and envied for its material power..... I believe that Rome, and also Italy, with their free spirit, if not a very open one, are eminently liable to be benefited by Oriental influence without the help of any Germanic or Slavic intermediary..... I would like the great masterpieces of India to be as well known among us as those of Greece, they respond to our sensibility better than the latter. It is by disinterested study on a high plane that France can approach the East, and find there an enrichment of her intellectual patrimony..... I must confess that the East when she wants to come to us chooses very different ways. She throws herself (and with what candid confidence!) on applied science. Even some of these modern religious movements are deeply tinted with Anglo-saxon protestantism..... In one word, the East, when she wants to progress, Americanizes herself.

*

Marcel Cahen

The East worships the inner life, the West on the contrary is almost exclusively attached to the outer manifestation of life..... The East is spirit, the West matter. What danger can there be in learning to know the East? Is it a danger to enrich oneself? Once already, the Arabs, (*i.e.*, the East) fecundated the Mediterranean mind. What was the result? The Cathedrals! Then was destroyed Byzantism which endlessly discussed the letter, classified, divided.....Art, letters, philosophy,—all have been influenced by the East and also especially science.....The East is all synthesis.....To the spiritual and intellectual anarchy of our times, it offers a loving co-operation ; it is all tolerance and trust.

*

Paul Claudel

Are the East and West completely impenetrable to one another? By no means ; man is the same everywhere. The interpreters? Go to the sources. Is there a danger? Not at all. It is never an evil to know oneself. Can we find in the knowledge of the East an enrichment of our culture? Yes. In what field,—art, letters, philosophy? In all three. What values make the superiority of the West? Uniquely Christianity.*

*

E. Dinet and *Sliman ben Ibrahim.*

Maeterlinck should logically sub-divide his first lobe into a certain number of irreconcileable lobules,—a French one, an English one, a German one, a Russian one, etc. The proof of their discordance has been shown in the awfulest way the world has ever seen..... More than any other nation, France is penetrable to Oriental influence, thanks to her wide-mindedness..... M. Henri Massis' crusade is a very dangerous outburst of medieval fanaticism..... In all fields, Oriental influence could bring extremely fruitful results, if it were intelligently utilised. To those who would tell us, with a shrug of their shoulders, that a palm tree cannot be grafted on an apple tree, we answer that man possesses a power of adaptation unknown in the vegetable world. Never has any civilisation been rejuvenated otherwise than by the grafting of alien elements. All those which, seeking for regeneration, came back to their primeval sources, only accelerated their own decay..... As the Arabic proverb says : *a single hand cannot applaud.*

*

*By Christianity Claudel means strictly Roman Catholicism.

Fernand Divoire

The West and the East remain two separate worlds because their activities have not the same goals. Ours is to rush about like wasps in a bottle, to create machines and speed ; theirs is to reach wisdom, often through immortality.

*

Alexandre Embiricos

It was the interpeneration of East and West which made civilisation. Civilisation, though it may appear to-day as a specially Occidental creation, would not be what it is without Asia's tribute. The East fecundated the West.....The West which possesses conscious intelligence never had the deep dreams of Asia..... If Asia has shaken off her slumber, it is because the West has penetrated her.....The oldest Asiatic races become young nations..... The most Europeanised of them are our most redoubtable enemies.....But let us be reassured ; civilisation would not perish if the West lost its supremacy.

*

Claude Farrére.

Maeterlinck, a purely Western man of genius, understands of course nothing of the East. His opinion is therefore negligible. We Frenchmen are easily penetrable by Oriental influences, if you mean by the Orient, Turkey, India, China. If you mean the nearer East,—Russia, Germany,—we are on the contrary absolutely impenetrable. I have not the honour to know M. Henri Massis but I think the preceding answer is sufficient, as it was necessary. The Chinese influence would be very useful to us in the philosophic field.

*

René Gillouin.

It seems beyond dispute that if the West is much more advanced than the East in the knowledge and mastership of the material universe, the East is much more advanced in the mastership and knowledge of the spiritual world, or at least of the region of that world which is accessible to man's intelligence and will..... If a synthesis of the positive values of the East and West is possible and desirable, as I believe it is, I think that the French, mind would be much more apt than the Slavic or Germanic mind to deal with the distinctions, eliminations, and compositions, necessary to this object.

*

René Guénon.

If Westerners do not understand anything of the East, it is solely the effect of a certain mental deviation which characterises modern civilisation. There is only one remedy, to bring back the West to the real intellectuality whose notion it has lost. There is no possibility of harmony with the East outside this condition. On the other hand, if the Westerners recover the knowledge of the true principles, the agreement will come by itself.....Germans and even Russians are certainly, together with the Anglo-saxons, the least apt to grasp the Oriental mentality. One would certainly find more favourable elements in the so-called Latin peoples..... It is in this field (arts and literature) that really profitable results can be expected..... As to philosophy it is nothing but an exclusively Occidental point of view, which by reason of the narrow limits inherent in it, and the prejudices it implies, can be but an obstacle to the understanding of Oriental thought as well as of anything else that does not fall within its scope..... The erudite research work done by Orientalists is also without any import, and useless to foster this understanding, if not directly harmful by the many misinterpretations it spreads.

The West only enjoys a material superiority which nobody envies it..... If a meeting is to take place, it is not for the East to make advances, it is in the West that an essential change should first take place. Besides, since the West is far more interested than the East in such a junction, it is for the former to show proofs of that good will without which no efficient action could be possible. You do not save a patient who does not want to be cured. The most terrible thing is that the West is enjoying its disease, and far from acknowledging it, boasts of it as a superiority.

*

Myriam Harry.

Not only do I not think that the East and the West are impenetrable but I find that they complete each other with cadence and harmony.

Firstly, does not Europe owe anything to Asia?..... Our futility, our indecency, our easy-goingness scandalize the East. And I believe that, with regard to decency, we have everything to win from a *rapprochment* with the peoples from beyond the sea (Mediterranean).

*

René Jouglet.

What Orient do you mean? The Orient of to-day, or the one of

before the Russo-Japanese War? The Asia as it is to-day or the Asia of Tagore and Gandhi?..... The truth is that the European civilisation of the twentieth century in its utilitarian form is spreading rapidly over Asia. It means that while you are trying to unite with a discipline which made India what it is, the greatest part of Asia is engaged in re-modelling itself on Europe.

*

Jacques de Lacretelle.

That a mind should refuse to enrich itself, repel what it does not know lest it could become dangerous for that which it knows, seems to me to be a doctrine worthy only of the monks and scientists of the middle ages.

*

René Lalou.

The call of the East is an irresistible wind, but only one of the many which solicit us. It is as useful as the others are. Let us no longer speak of danger: as far as thought is concerned at least, it is generosity which succeeds and avarice that fails.

*

Marquis-de-Lamazetiére.

One cannot say that there are two civilisations—the European and the Asiatic—opposed to each other. If you go from West to East you find successively the European civilisations very orientalized in the East; two Eurasian civilisations, the Russian, and the Mussalman; a quasi-Eurasian civilisation, that of India, which the Persian, Greek Mussalman and British conquests have successively influenced; finally the extreme Eastern civilisation, which is undergoing more and more the influence of American civilisation, so different from the European.

One can only say that one civilisation has had an action on another when it changes or at least modifies its laws, customs, or modes of thinking and feeling. Asia has not yet exercised such an action on Europe..... The supremacy of the Western civilisation lies in its sense of individualism which brought about scientific discoveries..... But this individualism has caused the West to lose its sense of solidarity.

*

Maurice Maeterlinck.

My oriental love has much to tell you, but the occidental one, pressed by work has not the leisure to make out just now what his colleague of the rising sun dictates to him.

Paul Masson-Oursel.

The reciprocal impenetrability of East and West is a prejudice ardently cultivated within the two cultures by the mystic and the traditionalist..... France is a personality not an abstract method. She will receive the Oriental influence in accordance with her traditions..... The influence of Asia on our art, literature, thinking will increase more and more..... One merit of Westerners is that they are 'disinterestedly interested' in natural science..... Their shame is the idolatry of strength and the oblivion of spiritual values.

*

A. Meillet.

The oppostion made between the East and the West seems to me inaccurate. Nothing is more different from the rationalistic civilisation of France, than for instance the puritan spirit of the English. As in the East, nothing is more dissimilar from India than China.

Why interpretation? There is no people which has done more to know the East than ours..... A civilisation with such marked features as ours, runs no risks in widening its horizon. As for art, Oriental influence has been at work with us for a long time.

The value of our civilisation is exclusively intellectual.

*

Paul Oltramare.

(Prof. University of Geneva.)

I neither think that Indian thinking is impenetrable to us, nor that ours is impenetrable to them. It is quite true that the surroundings and history have gradually deeply differentiated East and West. But the former have cultivated only intellectual habits..... A man enriches himself by the knowledge he acquires of other men, however different from him they may be, perhaps all the more when they are more different..... The Oriental shows more wisdom than the Occidental because he is not so easily captured by things of little or no value.

*

André Seigfried.

The East and the West can, I think, understand each other by the intellect. But either of them remains most often incapable of feeling the standpoint of the other. Therefrom arises the principal cause of misunderstanding between the two, and there is scarcely a remedy to be found for

that. However, there are in the West people who feel in the European way and *vice-versa*.....It is through them that the contact can be established..... We forget too often that the source of Christianity is oriental..... But Jesus who used to say: "My kingdom is not of this world", would hardly recognise the men of the West as his disciples.

*

Franz Toussaint.

We are penetrable to our Oriental influence. The interpretor has been, is, and will be the Asiatic..... We must get an abundant share of the Oriental treasure. *Ex oriente lux*! Our culture will be enriched, and our means of expression renovated. The results will be excellent in the field of life, because this influence will abolish the idea of progress. Also, then, in the fields of art and literature. Allow me to think that the greatest poets of all times are Indians, Chinese, Japanese. As for philosophy, it is as futile in the East as in the West..... In my opinion the West has no superiority whatever over the East.

*

Léon Werth.

Are the East and the West impenetrable to each other? I think that in the East, as in the West, there are brains which nothing can penetrate.

*

Romain Rolland.

Where Henri Massis is, Romain Rolland cannot be.

* * *

Our conclusion is that, judging from the views of so many authorised representatives of European thought, the "Calls from the East" find in the West a response. We even venture to say that they testify to the existence of a tacit understanding, or at least of a sincere desire for collaboration and union, which had remained on the whole unspoken till now.

The "Nordists" may therefore go on boasting of their self-assumed superiority. This will not hamper for ever the irresistible, though sometimes unconscious, will for human co-operation. We have felt it our duty to bring before the eyes of the Visva-bharati workers documents and facts which justify this expectation.

THE DOCTRINE OF KARMA.

By Prof. Haridas Bhattacharya.

That all moral action has an effect in a realm other than the physical is not a peculiar conviction of the Hindu mind alone, for in all ages and in all climes this has been used as an argument for morality and religion. But to the treatment of this problem on a metaphysical basis it was reserved for Indian thinkers to bring the wealth of their copious imagination and their keen intellect; and creeds that differ from one another in all conceivable ways are still at one so far as the treatment of this problem is concerned.

The ancient thinkers of India proposed to themselves the task of ascertaining the nature of moral action, its effect in the visible and the invisible world, the mode in which the individual has to be conceived if he is to enjoy the fruits of his actions, and also whether it is possible to transcend the domain of action altogether. As, in their belief, the world was the scene of moral activity and enjoyment of the fruits of action (especially bad ones) the problem of *karma* and of existence were more or less inseparable.

The joyous enjoyment of life which characterised the Vedic hymns was toned down considerably in the time of the Upanishads and was replaced, later still, by a sense of world weariness which made the indentification of action and existence a perfectly easy process. We therefore find that the problem of good and evil is discussed in connection with existence in its fourfold aspect of *hêya* (*Lit.* that which ought to be abandoned) or suffering from worldly existence, *hêyahêtu* or the cause of that suffering (here the doctrine of Karma is discussed), *hána* or destruction of suffering, and *hánopáya* or means of such destruction. From very early times all speculation was intensely coloured by this practical motive and all theory of reality had to show, not only that the world conformed to it, but that also it led to salvation; hence along with object (*vishaya*) and the

requisite qualification (*adhikára*) of philosophical speculation the questions of purpose (*prayôjana*) which is salvation, and relation (*sambandha*) between the philosophy taught and that purpose, were also discussed.

The history of religious thought in India is a history of the conflict between form and substance, expression and intention, of a moral action. In spite of the fact that all through this long history the main trend of speculation has been, on the whole, on the side of substance, formalism had a tendency to possess the unthinking portion of the people owing to a variety of reasons. The main difficulty was linguistic, especially on account of the peculiar theory of sound upheld by the Hindus from a very early time. The gods had to be approached in certain definite ways through the language of the gods (*gîrvánavánî*), *viz.* Sanskrit, and only a faultless use of that language could unlock the heart of the gods and the gate of heaven.

The effect was a tyranny of repetition which clogged free thought in religious matters, and introduced a number of set prayers, hard and fast formulæ, and stereotyped practices into the everyday religious life of the people, from which arose mystic faith allied to blind superstition, soulless repetition allied to hypocrisy, or open revolt against the whole Brahmanic creed, according to education, temperament and time. But the better minds of India were never for a moment deluded by ritualism, and all through the centuries we find successive religious reforms which attacked this or that aspect of the ritualistic creed and called people back to the true element in religion. Daring innovations in thought and faith, which would have produced bloodshed in other lands, were allowed in India, because they were never absent at any time. Atheists and heretics flourished side by side, with the devout and the orthodox, and though there were bitter polemics on either side, the means adopted was argument, not arms. Rulers patronised diverse creeds and in fact encouraged the meeting of people of different opinions. Defection from the ranks of the ritualists must have occurred pretty frequently, but within the limits of society freedom was never opposed. It was only when a

particular religion was openly renounced that social intercourse ceased, but not therefore dialectical intercourse.

The existence of a class of keen-witted free thinkers by their side kept the ritualists all along busy devising new arguments in justification of their practices, and we find that some of the astute members of that brotherhood did not shrink from interpreting them allegorically, just as they do now. What the Brahmans themselves did, by way of attack, at the time of the Aranyakas and the Upanishads was done in later times also by other castes, and a glance at the mediæval saints of India will show that they belong to all castes and all ranks. It speaks highly of the intellectual ability of the average Indian that even in a priest-ridden country he did not lose the capacity of appreciating rational conduct and cogent argument advocated by persons of any caste. Some of the mediæval saints were accounted low class men—a weaver, or a cobbler, for instance,—and yet their protests against formalism were not only heard but disseminated by their followers. In this way, some became founders of sects that still live and claim thousands of adherents.

This is partly due to the fact that, in India, corporate worship had feeble sway (although many sacrifices required a large number of priests with definite functions) and society allowed its members to please themselves in religious matters so long as they did not prove positively anti-social. A polytheistic religion had to allow some option in religious practices as a matter of necessity and the proselytising spirit was never so strong that one felt uncomfortable when his brother's salvation was in danger. It was therefore freely suggested that salvation could be secured in a variety of ways and that all religions could serve as the means; and when duties were apportioned according to caste, it had to be further conceded that conduct could not be uniform in view of the divergence of duties imposed on the various castes.

In connection with ritualistic practices three points are worth noticing. The first is the tendency to sacrifice the spirit to the letter of the shastric injunctions,—a tendency to think that where all external requirements (*e.g.* pronunciation, choice of time, place, men and materials) have been satisfied the moral

result is bound to follow. Thus far sacrifice partook of the nature of magic, as in fact all worship does that believes that the lock of heaven has only one key of set formula to fit it, and that any deviation therfrom means the loss of heaven. The second point worth noticing is the hypothetically imperative character of many sacrificial injunctions. There were undoubtedly many formal practices, daily and seasonal, which every class or caste had to observe for no ostensible benefit. There were *vidhis* and *nishedhas* (positive and negative injunctions) which were enjoined, not because any utility was promised, but because they were directed in the scriptures and non-performance would entail sin.

The third point in connection with the sacrifices was the increasing monopoly of the Brahmanas in matters spiritual. As is inherently probable, the hymns and sacrifices were originally supposed to be spontaneous expressions of spiritual experiences and desires, and, as such, could not be offered through agents and substitutes. The caste system had not probably become very rigid and even the equality of the sexes in hymnal adoration had not been forgotten when the Vedic sacrifices began. But soon after, the Sudras and women shared the same fate in matters sacrificial; caste began to assume rigidity; and the ritual of sacrifice became so lengthy, so technical and overgrown with detail that a special class had to be trained to ensure accuracy. In fact, a division of labour and specialisation must soon have followed even among these specially trained men (for at first the capacious memory of the priests was the only record of the scriptures) and the Ksatriyas, or warrior caste, that shared with the Brahmans the honour of being composers of hymns, performers of sacrifices and repositories of divine wisdom, gave up the art of worship to devote themselves to the task of fighting and government, which became increasingly insistent as the Indo-Aryan settlement became more and more extended and organised; and in this way a separation of Church and State was effected.

A variety of causes however tended to lesson the importance of sacrificial *karma*. The people in general lost touch with most sacrifies through incapacity and ignorance, and to them,

therefore, all sacrifices were only spectacular events, and not spiritual experiences. The gradual encroachment of form upon matter and, together with it, the fact that the priests probably became less qualified and more avaricious as time went on, led to a loss of faith in sacrificial practices, and to the description of gifts to priests as a kind of bondage (*dakshina-bandha*) which acted as an obstacle to liberation. Then again, many sacrifices involved the killing of animals (or even of men) and thoughtful persons began pertinently to ask whether such sacrificial cruelty and murder would not bear their own fruit and render nugatory the good fruits of the sacrifice by itself. The myth about the victims themselves going to heaven as a result of the sacrifice was exploded by the Chárváka atheists who advised the sacrificer to offer his own father in case he really believed in such short methods of sending to heaven; while the Samkhya rationalists more philosophically argued that evil actions, like good ones, could not fail to produce their own effects if the doctrine of moral causality were true. What again were the results of practices of such dubious utility? Was it for any permanent benefit to the *self* that austerities, penances, vigils etc. were performed?

This leads us to ask what exactly was supposed to be the result of moral actions.

The earliest thinkers of India made a distinction between the visible effect (*drshtaphala*) and the invisible effect (*adrshta-phala*) of a moral action, such as they conceived the rituals to be. When, for instance, *ghrta* (clarified butter) was poured on the sacrificial fire, there was the visible effect in the shape of a tongue of fire and a column of smoke, but there was also an invisible effect in the moral world in the shape of merit if the ceremony had been rightly performed. Thus all ritualistic actions have double effects—one physical and visible, and the other moral and invisible. A good action is supposed to produce *dharma* (merit) and a bad action, whether materially or formally so, *adharma* (demerit). The physical effects follow the law of immediate succession, but the moral effects fructify at a much later time (in the next life in many cases, or even later) when the maturing conditions are present. Again, while the physical

effect is mainly, if not wholly, produced on others, the moral effect comes to rest upon the head of the doer himself (not however according to the Buddhists, who denied the continued existence of the same soul and who therefore held that the effect comes to rest upon others). Thus as with our actions we are scattering our energy all around we are gradually heaping at the same time on our head a pile of moral effects in the shape of *dharma* and *adharma, punya* and *pápa* (virtue and sin). Unlike the intellectual memory, which Bergson says we all gather as we live, this memory is moral memory of the individual and is the invisible carrier not so much of personal indentity as of moral destiny. This moral memory called *samskára* (piled-up character or latent impression) is regarded as an objective force which makes for rebirth in a shape sometimes determined by the *vásaná,* or desire of the expiring individual, sometimes under the superintendence of a personal God whose capacity does not extend to the suppression or suspension of the *samskára,* and very often without reference to anything else. This *samskára* is not generally accompanied by a persistence of intellectual memory but exceptional cases of *játismaratva* (capacity to remember one's past life) do occur, and then we have persons who not only reap the fruits of their previous actions, but also know what these actions were. Buddha, for instance, is credited in the *Játaka* or Birth stories with the reminiscence of a long series of his past lives.

Reserving for a later treatment the exact mode in which *kárma* was supposed to operate in rebirth, we may here notice briefly the peculiar theory of heaven advocated by Indian thinkers to discourage the people from taking to the way of *kárma.* In Vedic literature we come across burial as a mode of disposing of the dead (a practice which still survives for children and certain religious communities) and, occasionally connected with it, a belief in the bodily resurrection of the departed. But later speculations had to base themselves on the practice of cremation, which led to a disbelief in the possibility of the survival of the gross body and a belief that if any embodiment of the soul were still to be supposed, it must be a of a finer nature. But there was the belief all along that whatsoever might be the

mode of survival the possibility of enjoying the fruits of action subsisted.

When once *kárma* fell from its pedestal of glory, a difficulty was felt regarding its proper function and position in spiritual culture. The most extreme among the thinkers roundly declared that all rites and ceremonies only served to bind the soul, for all actions were modes of ignorance, and salvation could come only through knowledge. If then the Scriptures obviously enjoined certain rites, these must not be construed as having any binding force on the wise.

The ascendency of this standpoint is visible in the subtlety with which allegorical and symbolical meanings began to be traced in passages enjoining sacrifice. At a much later time than we are speaking about, a similar attempt was made to introduce spiritual and symbolic meanings into grossly sexual and sensual acts in Vaisnavism and Tantricism; but the germs of allegorical interpretation are present in much older literature. We are told, for instance, that the true sacrifice is that in which the mind is the bow, the sacred symbol *Om* is the arrow, and Brahma is the target. This change of attitude towards rites and ceremonies must have received a great impetus from the increasing strength of Jainism and Buddhism which discarded Vedic rites but did not fail to produce impressive personalities about whose intellect, character and final destiny the ordinary people had little doubt. At a much later time, when Hinduism sank back into formalism and occultism, we find Kabîr similarly denouncing the sanctimonious practices of different sects. The substitutes suggested for Karma were Knowledge (*Jñána*), Faith (*Sraddhá*), Devotion (*Bhakti*) and Righteousness, and fierce dialectics were waged in favour of each as against the other proposed substitutes; but all agreed that formal practices were of little avail in the matter of salvation. To feel one's identity with the totality of Being and to behave accordingly—these constitute the sole means of redemption.

It would be a mistake to suppose that the Upanishads unanimously advocated the abandonment of all *karma*. There were moderates as well as extremists, and while the latter were uncompromising opponents of Karma the former thought that

karma was not without some value. As accessory to *Jñána* and *Bhakti, Karma* was wanted (even *Asana* or posture, and *Pránáyama* or breathing, were later on called *Yogángas* or accessories to contemplation)—in fact the soul could be prepared for illumination only through the performance of enjoined duties. Again and again we are told that if Karma without illumination is valueless for salvation, the same is true of *Jñána* without Karma—in fact, a worse habitation is assigned to those who stick to the path of knowledge alone. The question had indeed a deeper issue involved in it than what appears at first sight. If *Jñána* alone could suffice, the life of a house-holder —the whole *Varnásrama dharma* (the duties of each caste and each period of life) in fact—was unessential and social duties had no binding force. But if no neglect of worldly duties was permissible, and saving knowledge could come as much to the house-holder as to the recluse, the whole world need not turn ascetic and retire to the forest. As a matter of fact we find that many eminent sages, *e.g.* Yajñavalkya, Vasistha, etc. had families,—they were *gotra-pravartakas* or heads of clans—and the great Janaka, to whom even ascetics went for illumination, ploughed his own field and performed other household duties.

It cannot be suggested seriously that the Indians to whom we owe so much subtle thought were yet so entirely devoid of common sense that they could suggest for a moment that the whole world should turn ascetic. They were less pessimistic as a whole than Schopenhauer who could find a solution of the *Weltsmer* only in a simultaneous denial of the *will to live* by all individuals. The Indians wanted to set apart a class of thinkers, just as Plato did, but they knew also, as all persons with common sense do, that to advocate universal celibacy meant the extinction of the human species. So, like Catholicism in the West, they prescribed celibacy for a class only, and extolled the householder as the fountain of race-continuity and the support of society as a whole. It was not *Karma*, then, that killed, but *Karma* done in a pecular manner or with a peculiar motive. If the objectionable element of actions could be removed, all *karmas* were pretty much alike and the house-holder stood exactly on the same plane with the ascetic.

Thus between actionlessness and action was interposed dispassionate and detached action which, as action, fulfilled social obligation and, as detachment, prevented the generation of fruits or moral effects inimical to salvation. It is only when an action is done with the intention of acquiring personal results that it serves to bind—even a desire for heaven is a kind of desire (*istápûrti*) and therefore a mode of bondage. How then is detached action possible? Let duty be its own motive *i.e.* let it be done for its own sake—this is the conclusion to which Indian philosophers came as a result of the conflict between knowledge and action.

Be happy in the thought that through you courses the current of Divine volition and that your function is to serve as the conduit pipe for the unimpeded flow of Divine activity. You can indeed pollute or retard the current by evil and ignorance, but there your capacity ends. So long as you erroneously lay claim to the current as your own, you follow the path of *prêyas* and *bhakti* (desire and enjoyment); the moment you realise that you are simply a channel, you take to the path of *srêyas* and *mukti* (the good and salvation). So your highest good is to annihilate yourself as an independently active entity and to understand that it is the good of the whole that is being realised through you. You are to abandon your finitude and to view all things *sub specie œternitatis*.—In conformity with this standpoint we find passages, added terminally to a sacrifice, which decline the accruing merit and direct it to god.

In connection with this dedication of the fruits of action to God, two opposite views regarding the reality of the finite emerge into view. If the finite is really to surrender the fruits to God, and the operation is to be a real sacrifice, then the finite must be a real entity and its act of willing must signify the operation of a real centre of moral activity. If the action does not belong to the individual as a real being, the surrender of fruits has no meaning. The fact that fruits of evil deeds could not be similarly dedicated shows that the transference could not be effected by magic alone. Only good actions could be so dedicated, which means that a substantial self-abnegation was involved in the process and the finite made a real sacrifice by its will.

But with this is often mingled the other view of the finite according to which the dedication is only rendering back to God what really belongs to Him. So long as a person illusorily fancies himself to be a *karta* (agent) he does not know his true nature. The actions do not really belong to him, they belong in reality to God; and he only misappropriates them to himself by ignorance. He is simply the instrument of Divine activity, and his salvation consists in knowing that. All that he does has been foredone by God, or if it is really done then it is not he that does it but God in so far as He is in him. There is no scope for personal activity, either because all things are fated, or because it is the Infinite that acts through the finite.

We reach here the heart of the difference between Hinduism and Christianity. The relentless logic characteristic of the Indian thinkers demanded that all sentiment must be set aside when dealing with man and his destiny. Action has been done, and good or evil result must follow. Somebody must enjoy that result and, except in Buddhism, this somebody is the person himself, for the law of moral justice would be violated if one should sow and another reap. The sins of fathers are not visited on their children, nor can any person take off the sins of others, or serve as a ransom for mankind.

It is, however, only in the intellectualistic systems of Sankara, Jaimini, Kapila and others, that pure logic dominated the relation between deed and fruition, and left no room for the intervention of God. The theistic systems of India, on the other hand, felt from the outset that, to such an impotent God, real devotion was both difficult and useless. Hence both in the Vaishnava and Shaiva schools, as well as in popular beliefs based on the Pauranic legends, attempts were made to keep the initiative capacity of God unaffected by the law of *karma*. The quarrels of Indian systems on this point remind one of the scholastic disputes regarding freedom and predestination, the intellect and the will of God, in Mediæval Europe. In both, the real question was the nature and amount of freedom and the possibility of new beginning left to God and to man. If what we do here and now determines what we shall be elsewhere in future, what possibility is left open for working off demerit in

case of evil action, or of ever gaining salvation at the end?

But, as has been observed before, the Indian theistic systems refused to accept the doctrine of *karma* in its entirety, for then the power of God had to be conceived as limited. They therefore continued to use expressions like *anugraha, karuná, prasáda* (mercy or grace) of God and thought that in salvation there must not only be the approach of man towards God, but also the condescension of God to come down to man. Popular belief reared itself on the inherent possibility that, unless God willingly meets the devotee half-way, no austerity or penance or sacrifice could be of any avail.

While so much was being said for and against *karma,* it was necessary to determine precisely its nature and kinds, for even if it were true that some *karmas* were inefficacious for the *summum bonum,* others might be of different degrees of usefulness. For that, again, it was necessary to know what the actions were required to culminate in, before the highest good could be achieved. There is a remarkable consensus of opinion in Indian thought on this point, in spite of certain differences.

Some were uncompromising advocates of social and caste duties and held that salvation could come from the faithful performance of social obligations. It is by serving others according to one's station and capacity that one could gain salvation. And they were partly right in this that even on the monistic theory such a step was justifiable. Pantheism in India has taken two forms. The one is the view that Being alone exists and the whole phenomenal world is an illusion. But, coupled with it, we have the other that everything is *Brahman*—a view which implies that finitude is not altogether an illusion but is, like the *natura naturata* in Spinoza's system, a transformation of the One into the totality of the Many. The many is the tangible form of the One, and to serve this many is really to serve the One which is invisibly present in it.

The field of doing good thus widened till it touched Brahma on the one side, and the blade of grass on the other. No one who reads the *mantrams* of the *tarpana* (oblation to the manes) can fail to be impressed by the largeness of the Hindu heart and its solicitude for the good of creation as a whole.

But the performance of duty may degenerate into a kind of habit where the intention may be absent, and things may be done simply because others do them. Hence it was felt necessary by some to point out that mechanical conformity without knowledge and intention was not enough. Sacrifices form the lowest class of action, as they may be blindly performed, and may not indicate an active and conscious good will towards others. In the Buddhistic, Jaina and Yoga systems, therefore, an elaborate system of moral training was laid down to get beyond mere formality and to reach true knowledge. None of these put any very great stress on the necessity of God. Buddhism was practically silent about God; the Jainas regarded Him as the greatest of the *Arhatas* or omniscient beings, but not the only one; and the Yogins wanted a God only as a help to meditation and as a supreme example.

The ascendency of knowledge in salvation is akin to its ascendency in all fields, for after all neither sacrifice nor conduct is possible without a theory of reality. But there is always the danger that speculation may transform itself from a means into an end, and that the belief should gain currency that knowledge alone is enough for salvation. The danger is increased when it is further supposed that this knowledge has no reference to the external world, and in fact, that the wordly wise are the least fitted to know reality.

Again and again in the Upanishads we are told that all knowledge except self-knowledge is *avidyá* which is sometimes regarded as a positive hindrance to true knowledge, but is at others viewed more favourably as helping self-knowledge (*avidyayá mrtyum tîrtvá vidyayá amrtamasnutê*: by material knowledge cross death and then by self-knowledge enjoy immortality). This condemnation is more frequent in subsequent literature; and faith, or devotion, or most frequently knowledge, is in turn regarded as the sole means of salvation.

The long and interesting history of this doctrine, of such vital import in regulating human activity, may lead one to hope that the stream of India's contribution to this region of thought will not stagnate at the phase it reached before the impact of Western Civilisation came upon India.

HAFIZ AND HIS ZOROASTRIAN MURSHED.

By D. J. Irani.

Hafiz, the Persian nightingale, was both a poet and a philosopher. His spiritual experiences are as sweetly sung by him as his raptures of love, his delight for the budding Spring and the sparkling wine. It is an undying joy to read the songs of Hafiz, his poems of burning love, and the joy becomes more exquisite still when we see Love expanding until it comes into tune with the Infinite.

But every *Sálik* (traveller) on the Path of Love requires a *Murshéd,* a spiritual leader or guide. The soul is trammelled, the path is obscure, beset with difficulties untold; and naught but the guidance of a loving and knowing *Murshéd* can lead the soul triumphantly to its ultimate destination. Then Realisation comes, the union with the Beloved is effected, the divine essence within us finds its own perfection and reaches its goal.

And who was the Murshéd to whom Hafiz owed all his enlightenment, all his progress towards perfection? He was a Zoroastrian Magian,—the Pir-e-Moghán of the Diván-e-Hafiz.

Hafiz knew the value of the human soul. He knew that the heart within was a mirror fine enough to reflect the image of the Lord, but that it was covered with dust which marred its reflecting power and impaired the vision. Who could cleanse the dust? Where was the master who could bestow on the mirror its pristine power to reflect the image? And so Hafiz prays to Providence to grant him the company of a man of insight, a real spiritual guide.

> The heart which is a royal mirror is tarnished with dust,
> From Providence I seek for the company of a man of
> translucent intellect.
>
> 546.2

Such a guide he found in the old Magian who owned a wine-house in the outskirts of the town. He found the light he was in search of, at the temple of the Magian. Apart from

the wine,—the actual juice of the grape which regaled the heart of Hafiz as much as it did that of Omar Khayyam,—the old Pir-e-Moghán, with his ancient lore of Zoroastrian Persia, so satisfied the spiritual cravings of the soul of the poet that he sings out :

> Turn not your face away from the lane of the Magi
> For they sell there the key to the solution of all difficulties.
>
> 560.4

To the poetic nature of Hafiz,—to a spirit which loved freedom from convention,—fanaticism or bigotry in any form, or by any set of men, was repugnant. Hence the company of the other sages and divines of the time, the orthodox *mullas* and the bigoted *sheikhs,* whom he so often castigates in the Diván, must have appeared so boreing and unbearable to him that Hafiz announces that he will serve the Pier-e-Moghán only and sever his connection with all the others.

> Go Hafiz and render thy service to the Old Magian.
> Seize hold of his skirt and sever yourself from everything else.
>
> 365.7

And in this decision of his, to become the disciple of the Magian, he cares not for name and fame. He has cast his lot with the Zoroastrian sage. His heart is at peace, and he believes his soul will rightly be set on its way to the realisation of its object. He believes the path will be made smooth and easy by the Magian sage. Men of broad vision and wide sympathy are considered heretics by their orthodox brethren of every religion. Hafiz suffers in the same way, but he cares not whether his name is sought to be brought to the dust likewise. And with perfect nonchalance he says :

> May the good fortune of the Old Man of the Magi endure,
> for all else is then easy ;
> Let others go their way and remove from their memory
> my name.
>
> 441.9

To Hafiz not only was the goal of life beyond perception, but the object, the meaning of it all had so long been outside the pale of knowledge and understanding. His vision was blurred, his mind was chaos. We do not exactly know how it all happened, but Hafiz knocks at the door of Old Zoroastrian Sage, and the door of meaning (Reality) is slowly but surely opened unto him.

> The gate of Meaning (Reality) was opened unto my heart
> on that day
> When I became an inmate of the court of the Pir-e-Moghán.

For Hafiz was yearning to obtain the gem of Love, the gem with the wondrous power of transmuting the base metal of humanity into shining gold. In the treasure-house of the academy and the *madresah,* the preserve of the orthodox scholars whom he shuns for their narrow-mindedness, he does not hope to find the gem. In the mosque, the fanaticism of the divines and the sheikhs had, he believes, hidden the jewel. Hence Hafiz declares that Love bids him go from the monastery and the madresah and the mosque to the wine-house of the Magian sage, there to find the treasure.

> Seek not the gem of Love, O Hafiz, from the corner of
> the academy
> Put your step out if you want to proceed in the quest.
> 566.11

> From the mosque, I am sent by Love, to the tavern ;
> I go obediently, O heart, and raise no question.
> 345.3

And the robe of the devotee, which to Hafiz was nothing but a cloak of deceit to hide a multitude of sins and shortcomings, was dropped in the tavern of the Magi. It was cast off,—and what remained? We are startled to receive the answer from the lips of Hafiz, on which, however, no far-fetched interpreta-

tion should be placed, that the sacred-thread of the Zoroastrian was all that was left.

> Once I had a holy cloak and it used to hide a hundred
> faults of mine ;
> It was pawned to wine and the minstrels ; and the sacred-
> thread (of the Magi) was all that was left.

And here the broad vision and the large mind and heart of Hafiz become apparent. Hafiz was a Moslem; Hafiz died a Moslem and a Shiah. He had the whole of the holy Koran by heart. Yet, he went to the tavern of the Zoroastrian sage simply because he found that, at that particular juncture, the Old Magian would lead him most quickly to the realisation of his object, the union with the Divine Beloved, the contact of the Divine Spark within and the Supreme Soul without. And this consummation he had always sought, both from the mosque and from the house of the Magian.

> To me, who have made the corner of the tavern my
> monastic cell.
> To me, whose early-morning prayer is the praise of the
> Pir-e-Moghán
> To me, the want from mosque or tavern is union with
> Thee
> I entertain no thought besides this, and God is my witness.
>
> 40.1,4.

And the world can live in peace, the harmony of the Divine Kingdom of Heaven can rule even amongst us, should we, mortal men,—quarrelsome mites with bloated heads as we are,—realise the supreme truth given expression to by Hafiz in these exquisite lines :

> Everyone is in quest of the Beloved whether he be sober
> or drunk,
> Every place is a House of Love whether it be the mosque
> or the fire-temple.
>
> 64.3.

The great thought expressed so finely in this verse is to be found in Omar Khayyam as well as in several other philosophic poets of Persia, and proves that the wholesale charge of bigotry laid at the door of Islam, without recognising such noble exceptions among its cultured devotees, is incorrect.

Long years Hafiz had spent in fruitless efforts for the acquisition of the wherewithal of vanity, the scholastic learning of the madresah, the false show and hypocrisy of the monastery. When standing at the door of the tavern to sit at the feet of the Old Magian sage there, Hafiz is overpowered with a feeling of shame for his lack of real attainments. What must then be the culture of the Old Man of the tavern?

> I shall go to the lane of the tavern weeping and abashed,
> For I am ashamed of my own miserable attainments.
>
> 325.4.

So Hafiz approaches with diffidence the house of the old master. Veritably, even as the followers of the ancient Magi, the Zoroastrians of to-day still do, the entrance of the house was cleansed and the door-step was sprinkled with water and all people old and young were welcomed to the place. Hafiz respectfully accosts the sage, and hears in reply the unpleasant but true statement that Realisation was impossible to a man whose life was led without judgement, whose eyes were fixed on no high ideals.

> The entrance to the Magi's house was swept clean and watered
> And the Old Man sitting there had invited the young and the old to his presence.
> I saluted the sage and smiling he said unto me:
> "O thou poor intoxicated fellow sated with wine
> "I think union with wakeful good fortune will not be granted unto thee
> "For thou art resting in the embrace of a drowsy fortune."
>
> 597. 1, 7, 9.

Abashed, Hafiz hears this reproof, but none with an ardent desire to learn, no soul quickened with a genuine love, is ever turned away from the door of the old Magian. Cleanliness and purity have been the first requisites of the ancient creed of the Zoroastrian Magi, and Hafiz tells us how he is made to enter the house of the Magian sage :

> Sighing came to me the Magian-child of the wine-seller,
> And said, "Wake up, thou sleep-stained traveller,
> "Wash and cleanse thyself and then come to the tavern,
> "That this old ruined temple may not be polluted by thee.
> "Pass through the stage of old age in piety, and let not
> "The robe of advancing age be stained by the habit of
> youthful ways."
>
> 498.2,3.

The veil of ignorance is then gradually raised, under the guidance of the knowing sage, kind and affectionate as only real sages can be. And Hafiz often proclaims his devotion and esteem for this Zoroastrian Murshéd of his in the Diván :

> I am the slave of the Old Man of the Magi who has
> released me from ignorance ;
> Whatever my Old Master does is the very essence of
> kind regard.
>
> 243.5.

The Message of the Infinite is now being borne in upon our poet. It comes from the silence of the woods; it comes from the fragrance of the flowers, the singing of the nightingales. And as the knowledge of the sage proceeds from the Pehlevi lore of the Zoroastrians, Hafiz seems to listen to the Divine Message conveyed by the nightingale as if it too were couched in this ancient tongue of Zoroastrian Persia.

> From a branch of the Cyprus tree, in the heroic tones
> of ancient Pelhevi, the nightingale
> Was singing last night the lesson-songs of the divine
> stages.
>
> 533.I.

In his esctasy Hafiz gives a poetic picture how Sraosh, the favourite angel of Zoroastrian theology, brings the wonderful tidings that the divine essence in him, and in all men, has its real abode elsewhere and not in this world of passing shows.

> How shall I tell thee that last night in the tavern when
> I was drunk and intoxicated,
> What wonderful tidings were brought unto me by the
> Sarush of the Invisible World!
> (He said): "O thou royal falcon of high aspirations,
> having for its seat the Sedreh in Heaven,
> "Your nest (of final rest) is not in the corner of this
> house of woes."
>
> 23. 5, 6.

Then the Realisation comes. It would require an essay in itself to trace the growth of the spiritual experiences of the poet. Suffice it to say here that he reached his goal. In one of his most beautiful odes (No. 171) he sings of receiving at last his Salvation and Freedom. Then he declares openly that this result he has achieved, this consummation he has reached, through the miraculous teachings of his Magian Murshéd.

> The service of the Old Man of the Magi is a wonderful
> elixir,
> I became like dust before him and he exalted me to his
> wonderful dignity.
>
> 171.9.

Till recently in Moslem Persia, the fanaticism of the orthodox and the want of knowledge of the unknowing used to look upon the Zoroastrians as if they were heathens. In their utter ignorance they closed their eyes against a brilliance and called it darkness. But when Hafiz, guided by his Magian sage, saw the Light of God in the house of his Murshéd, he proclaimed to the world where he saw it. To the frenzied followers of formalism he further says, with a courage that is astounding, that

they merely looked to empty forms, whereas he had a Vision of Truth itself and that, too, in the house of the Zoroastrian.

> I behold the Light of God in the tavern of the Magi,
> Just mark this wonder, what a light I see and from
> what a place!
> O Lord, who is the drainer of dregs of this wine-house?
> For I find his door to be the alter for (urging) wants, and
> the directing-arch for prayers.
> O chief of the pilgrims, do not make show of thy
> pretensions before me,
> For thou beholdest a (mere) house, while I behold the
> Lord of the House Himself.
>
> 395. 1, 2, 3.

Hafiz by the guidance of his Magian Pir has attained his wish. In esctasy he comes to the tavern and inquires after his beloved Master to express his infinite devotion and love to him.

> Where is he, who had his abode at the door of the tavern,
> That I may lay my head at his feet and die before him.
>
> 404. 5.

Many a Divine, differing from Hafiz in the freedom of his views, and many an orthodox sheikh must have felt pity at seeing this great poet of Persia having a Zoroastrian for his Spiritual Guide. But Hafiz had a very pertinent answer for such pitying sheikhs.

> I am a disciple of the Old Man of the Magi, O sheikh,
> feel not offended with me;
> For you only held out the promise (of the great vision)
> whilst he (the Magian) carried it out.
>
> 156.7.

Having found his goal with the help of his Master, Hafiz hardly felt himself concerned with the protest of the inmates of the madresah and the monastery. Indeed he had no hesitation in declaring that from the Day of Creation he must have been

destined to pay his homage to the Magian sage, and he was what he was,—anything else he could not be.

> Now that my desire has been fulfilled through the tavern,
> My heart has got disgusted with the academy and the monastery.
>
> 504.6.

> From the first day of Creation the ring of the Old Magian is in my ear (I am his slave),
> We are what we were, and will ever remain the same.
>
> 146.2.

Everyone knows what strained interpretations have been sought to be placed on the poems of Hafiz. As an English translator of Hafiz has rightly observed, after the attempts of the ultra-orthodox to disown Hafiz had failed to dislodge him from the place he had won in the hearts of the people, they began interpreting his poems in a way suited to their purpose. I have read commentaries by otherwise erudite scholars, who are so obsessed with their preconceived notions that they do not hesitate to interpret a line having a most plain and natural meaning in a way unimaginable to a dispassionate student. Similarly various interpretations may be given and are given about the Pir-e-Moghan of Hafiz.

However, my personal view is this. From the beginning of history, at any rate since the Medes accepted the Zoroastrian faith, the Magi are acknowledged to be the priests of the Zoroastrians, the repository of the learning and culture of ancient Zoroastrian Persia. The evidence in the Divan seems to me to be conclusive that the Pir-e-Moghan was not a mere allegorical figure, but a real Magian Sage who had been given the seat of honour at the tavern,—an institution mostly kept up by Zoroastrians, as for the Moslems the liquor trade was unlawful. There is no indication whatever that Hafiz used the phrase in any but its natural sense.

In a beautiful ode in which Hafiz holds an imaginary discourse with his beloved, the distinction is clearly drawn that

the Old Magian who belonged to the ancient faith of Persia followed customs which differed from those of Islam.

> I said, "Wine and the patched cloak are not the recognised usages of religion."
> She replied "These customs are practised according to the creed of the Old Magian."
>
> 228.6.

In the following lines also the suggestion appears very clear to me that the Pir-e-Moghan of Hafiz was a real Magian who loved to keep his fire-altar always burning as in the days of old :

> I am held in regard at the temple of the Magi for this reason,
> That in my heart there is always a fire which is never extinguished.
>
> 2.68.

And surely, it seems as if the love of Hafiz for his Magian Master moved him to sing out in one of his odes at the advent of Spring :

> Revive the Zoroastrian religion and creed in the garden,
> Now that the tulip has kindled the fire of Nimrod.
>
> 236.3.

Let it be understood that I record in this article simply the fact which has impressed me most in my study of Hafiz. Zoroastrian as I am, I fully believe that a righteous and a loving man, whether he be a Christian or a Jew, a Hindoo or a Moslem, can equally see "the Light of God" guided by his own sage on the Right Path of Truth. For Truth belongs to no one "chosen people," as unfortunately the world of the ultra-orthodox of every race and creed thinks. It belongs to all, as doth the Supreme Being, and in the recognition of this fundamental fact lies the salvation of humanity.

ILLUMINATED TRAVEL LITERATURE

*A Review.**

By RABINDRANATH TAGORE.

In the days when travelling was difficult, the resistance it offered was needful for the assimilation of foreign facts. Mind takes its own time in order to masticate and digest its experience while overcoming the opposition of the strangeness of things. That time was amply allowed to it when conveyances were slow and roads full of obstructions, when special conveniences and home comforts did not lure travellers to go on with their habitual life in unaccustomed surroundings. Anyhow, they were compelled to be serious and never could be in a journalistic frame of mind, hurriedly taking notes of passing things, forming plausible conclusions on casual data.

The inevitableness of the differences between different races, living away from each other, is rarely realised in its full truth when we approach it too quickly, and have no time to reach its significance. And yet it should be the aim of travelling not merely to ascertain facts, but to own them through understanding. When Marco Polo came to the East, the vast space he had to cross laboriously disciplined him for the comprehension of cultures that were distantly apart from his own. He had the proper perspective of space, time and struggle which minimised the shock of all unexpected contacts, without taking away the novelty of the unfamiliar.

To-day the Western holiday-makers, who pay brief visits to Eastern countries, comfortably rushing across vast changes of environment, are unceremoniously hurled upon differences that are too obviously on the surface. Here they suddenly miss all the products of progress to which they have become accustomed, during the latest growth of their own civilisation, since the time of their grandparents. In their own countries their consciousness is kept stirred all the time by a sudden and rapid

---

*The Travel Diary of a Philosopher, by *Count Hermann Keyserling.*

extension of power that arouses in their minds the exultation of unlimited possibility. When they come to a continent where nature's great store-house of wealth remains closed and where peoples' minds are mostly preoccupied in following some time-honoured rules which, as they themselves believe, give perfection to social life, it is no wonder that the strongest impression which these western travellers carry away with them is that of the greyness of a blank existence. They fail to see anything significant because they miss here the intense light in which they habitually live. They believe that the obscurity is absolute, they only see the dusk and very little of the world that lives and moves behind its screen.

It is even worse for those of the West who have the opportunity of living for a time among Eastern races. They seldom have the need of making any real adjustment of life with their surroundings. They carry their Western shell with them everywhere, they form exclusive communities of their own, and create round themselves an impervious atmosphere of prejudice altogether out of harmony with the land of their exile. The longer they live in such places, the more callously rigid grows their sheath, and the harder it becomes for them to understand their neighbours in their completeness of humanity. Their lengthy experience merely represents prolonged and toughened professional experience, which is a great hindrance to all real human knowledge.

Moreover, the natural difficulty in understanding alien culture and character has been augmented in the case of such Western sojourners by the utilitarian interests which most of them have in the East, giving rise to propaganda of misrepresentation. The weapon of publicity tipped with the insidious poison of calumny, has become enormous in extent and power in Western political life. History is being falsified with more deliberation and cunning than ever before. Though such propaganda of distorted truths and fabrications has mostly been used by Western nations against one another, we ourselves are not safe therefrom,—we who have not the various organised means of making our voice heard by the world.

Through this universal fog of mutual misunderstanding Hermann Keyserling's *Travel-Diary of a Philosopher* comes to us like a streak of sunlight. It is a unique book showing in the author that rare spirit of intellectual freedom which is a greater gift for the traveller than mere power of observation or scholarly equipment. It is said in the Upanishad that he who achieves spiritual serenity enters into the All. This is the highest privilege that man can earn for himself,—to be able to make the Universe his own, to find his place everywhere.

Travelling reaches its best truth when through it we extend our spiritual ownership in return for our gift of sympathy. The man who is proud of his mental exclusiveness sinks deeper and deeper into penury of soul the more he travels and the longer he resides in countries alien to his own. All that is physical and external is necessarily a barrier,—it is to keep secure that which is within. Like the walls of a house it has weight and dimension, and therefore it can easily be classified and compared with others of its kind; but it can be appropriated only so far as to produce the illusion that the entire thing is in one's possession even while that which is essential remains out of reach.

External material may yield rich strata of facts to science, it may have practical worth for gold-diggers and slave-drivers, and yet something which is profoundly valuable may ever be screened by it from the casual observer. Because of this drawback, it ultimately demoralises men for whom it is the sole concern. For, wherever our dealings with human beings are restricted to the material plane, whether in our own country or outside it, we lose the touch of the complete truth of man which only can save us from degradation.

The West may not be fully conscious of this, but there can be no doubt that its purely practical connection with non-Western races is injuring its moral nature, wearing away the sensitiveness of its inner organ which is for the full recognition of human truth. Man's selfishness, the principal aspect of *avidyá,* obscurity of spiritual vision, ever had its manifestation in his society, but to-day its field has become fatally vast, its instruments powerful and numerous, its temptations overwhelming. And therefore apart from the physical and material

mischief it causes, its moral menace has become world-wide, lowering over all humanity.

It is in these circumstances that we hail Count Keyserling's book as a great book, introducing for the first time in travel literature that philosophical illumination which lights up the inner recesses of man, where it is easy for us to realise the unity of kinship needed for true understanding of one another. It richly supplements the scietific method of collecting and analysing facts, defining their immutable separateness. Here we see an unfettered mind crossing the exterior boundaries of facts, entering the realm of spirit where each one of us should be able to realise his own self in different moods and different stages of growth, having different problems to solve with the materials that are at hand; in other words, man should be able to find *himself* in every variety of manifestation, and should not merely recognise the fact of the differences, which is individual, but the meaning of their truth which is universal.

The attitude of mind revealed in this book is even more precious than the fluidly suggestive speculations which run along its pages like reflections of light upon the current of a meandering stream.

VISVA-BHARATI BULLETIN

I.

Red Oleanders.

Author's Interpretation.

(*From the Manchester Guardian.*)

Some few criticisms of my *Red Oleanders* that have appeared in the English papers have convinced me that to a considerable portion of my readers in England this play of mine seems obscure in meaning. Such a fact, I believe, almost always comes as a surprise to an author, because generally a work of this nature springs from a vision that is vivid to himself and a feeling that belongs to his direct experience. It is not for me to discuss the literary qualities of this book, which, being a mere translation, can have no pretension to a permanent place as literature in a language not the author's own. But I think, in justice to myself, I should make it clear that it has a definite meaning which can legitimately claim literary expression.

There was a time when, in the human world, most of our important dealings with our fellow-beings were personal dealings, and the professional element in society was never hugely disproportionate to the normal constitution of its life. Therefore, naturally, in the tradition of literature, which is the ideal expression of man's life, interactions of human relationship have so long occupied the most important position.

To-day another factor has made itself immensely evident in shaping and guiding human destiny. It is the spirit of organisation, which is not social in character, but utilitarian. Christian Europe no longer depends upon Christ for her peace, but upon the League of Nations, because her peace is not disturbed by forceful individuals so much as by organised Powers. Naturally, in all organisations, variation of personality is eliminated, and the individual members, in so far as they represent the combination to which they belong, give expression to a common type and very little to their uniqueness of individuality.

But the personal man is not dead, only dominated by the organised

man. The world has became the world of Jack and Giant—the Giant who is not a gigantic man, but a multitude of men turned into a gigantic system.

I am not competent to say how Europe herself feels about this phenomenon produced by her science. Very likely her stout-hearted Jack is already busy making breaches in the walls of this fortress. But I can say, on behalf of inarticulate Asia, what a terrible reality for us is the West, whose relation to ourselves is so little human. The view that we can get of her, in our mutual dealings, is that of a titanic power with an endless curiosity to analyse and know, but without sympathy to understand ; with numberless arms to coerce and acquire, but no serenity of soul to realise and enjoy.

It is an organised passion of greed that is stalking abroad in the name of European civilisation. I know that this does not represent the whole truth as to its character, and therefore the pity of it is all the greater when mainly this aspect of it is forcibly presented to us, causing the spread of dumb sadness over a vast portion of the world and the dread of a devastation of its future into an utterly bankrupt life. Such an objectified passion lacks the true majesty of human nature ; it only assumes a terrifying bigness, its physiognomy blurred through its cover of an intricate network,—the scientific system. It barricades itself against all direct human touch with barriers of race pride and prestige of power. The impersonal pressure which, from its aloofness, it applies to our living soul is enormous, ever narrowing our prospect of growth, smothering the power of initiative in our mind.

Once our people had either an Akbar or an Aurangzeb to deal with ; now we have an organised avarice,—frightfully simple in its purpose, mechanically complicated in its process. Its messengers who come to us—be they Lord Birkenhead or Lord Curzon—are never for us our fellow-beings in flesh and blood, as were Julius Cæsar and Antony who could easily find their immortal places in Shakespeare's drama. They are abstractions, at once far and near, and therefore awful ; they are obscure to us in the dark secrecy of their political laboratory and yet grimly concrete in their grasp upon our vitals.

Therefore it should cause no surprise to anybody if a poet, belonging to a continent swallowed by the menacing shadow of Europe, gives a prominent place among the *dramatis personæ* of his play to an apparition

which now so powerfully occupies the imagination of a vast world consisting of non-Western races. It is not an individual, but a doom ; and therefore it should never be compared to such characters as Lady Macbeth by those who wish to find a literary precedent. I am told that science has become a principal subject for some notable poets in Europe. That is natural, for science has permeated Western life ; it no longer has its own cradle in the secluded cells of the learned. In a similar manner, the hungry purpose, having science for its steed, running about unchecked, trampling our life's harvest, is not an intellectual generalisation unfit for imaginative literature. It is intensely real ; its hot breath is upon us ; its touch is all over our shrinking soul. It is the principal hero to-day in the drama of human history ; and I trust I have the right to invoke it in my own play, not in the spirit of a politician, but of a poet, possibly a lyrical poet.

I am glad to find that my critics readily acknowledge that Nandini, the heroine of the play, has definite features of an individual person. She is not an abstraction, but is pursued by an abstraction, like one tormented by a ghost. And this is the drama. Nandini is a real woman who knows that wealth and power are *máyá,* and that the highest expression of life is in love, which she manifests in this play in her love for Ranjan. But love-ties are ruthlessly molested by megalomaniac ambition, while an acquisitive intellect plies its psychological curiosity, probing into the elusive mystery of love through vivisection.

I can assure my readers that I never meant to use this book as propaganda. It is a vision that has come to me in the darkest hour of dismay. I have a stronger faith in the simple personality of man than in the prolific brood of machinery that wants to crowd it out. This personality—the divine essence of the infinite in the vessel of the finite—has its last treasure-house in woman's heart. Her pervading influence will some day restore the human to the desolated world of man. As in the animal world the physically meek has to-day inherited the earth, woman will one day prove that the meek in soul, through the sure power of love, will rescue this world from the dominance of the unholy spirit of rapacity. The joy of this faith has inspired me to pour all my heart into painting against the background of black shadows—the nightmare of a devil's temptation—the portrait of Nandini as the bearer of the message of reality, the saviour through death.

II.

East and West.

(*Comment on above interpretation by Manchester Guardian.*)

In a letter sent to us by Dr. Rabindranath Tagore on the reception of his poetic play *Red Oleanders,* an indictment, at once passionate and philosophical, is directed against the massive materialism of the Western world. The Indian, as Dr. Tagore sees the case, is denied those personal relations with the European or the American which alone can sweeten life and keep humanity human. Instead, he feels the relentless presssure of an organised abstraction to whose shattering force science contributes a merciless momentum.

But it is not the Orient alone that shudders under this menace, and if Dr. Tagore thinks that sensitive and intelligent Europeans are complacent about the flounderings of the new Leviathan he is less than just. European literature and, to a rapidly increasing extent, American literature, ring with the outcry of the little man swept away on a wave of forces that he did not fashion and cannot control. Since Antigone stood face to face with Creon the conflict of the one and the many has gone on and is now intensified by the multiplication of the many from the hundred to the hundred million. The ruler of the hundred million, be he autocrat or elected person, inevitably becomes an abstraction, and if the India Office seems a distant and chilly thing to India, so also seems Downing Street to an English voter.

Oceans divide us from the East, and that aggravates undoubtedly the individual's sense of impotence ; but the problem of Leviathan is, in its essence, the same for East and West. We share a common burden, and we should equally be at pains to prevent the organisation of man from becoming the brutalisation of man. We, all of us, who take any thought for the Commonwealth, are seeking hooks to bind Leviathan. We can do it by doing our own thinking and making democratic institutions as responsive as may be to the matter of our thought. We can do it, again, by strengthening all those associations of goodwill or common beneficent purpose which cut across the boundaries of the nations and link men of one faith or craft or social aim. We can do it by personal courtesy to our fellow-Jacks in a giant-ravaged world.

We can acknowledge Dr. Tagore's grievance against a West

which holds an East in fee, but we can assure him that we feel Leviathan's pressure on our own backs and are not all of us complacement under the load. He has dramatised humanity tormented by man-forces ; a glance at the modern European drama will show him that he has many companions in purpose as in practice. The last century liberated tremendous forces and left it for this one to control them. People are placed in subjection to things, more terribly perhaps in the East than in the West, but there is an increasing realisation of our plight. Dr. Tagore is not alone in his dismay, nor is he alone in desiring a restatement of personal values in a wilderness of impersonal forces.

III.

Susil Kumar Rudra.

By C. F. Andrews.

In the passing away of Susil Kumar Rudra our Visva-bharati has lost one of its practical idealists, who had already given his heart to the work which the Founder-President had undertaken. It is an open secret that he wished to spend the closing years of his lift at Santiniketan and to take part in the activities of Visva-bharati as far as he was able to do so ; and is was only the sudden illness which overtook him, that prevented this purpose from being fulfilled.

His own life began in the town of Burdwan, not far from Santiniketan itself. His father Pyari Mohan Rudra was living in Burdwan, when his son Susil was born. In the Burdwan Church, there is a tablet to the memory of Susil Rudra's father, and the house where he was born can still be pointed out. He was the same age as our Founder-President, being born in the year 1861. His early days were full of suffering and unhappiness owing to the loss of his mother. His father had to travel about a great deal and young Susil was left very much alone.

When he reached the College standard he was sent to the Duff College and also to the Presidency College where he gained his M.A. degree, taking Botany as his chief subject and also studying Economics and History. During these days at the University his faith was very greatly shaken by the atmosphere around him, which was full of intellectual and spiritual doubts and questionings ; but a long period of residence at the Oxford University Mission, in Cornwallis Street, where he made the friend-

ship of Father Brown and other members of the Oxford Brotherhood, brought back to him a renewal of his faith. Living among them and sharing their simple ascetic life, he himself became strong in his own spiritual faith once more.

Susil Rudra went to Delhi as a professor, in the year 1886 ; and for the whole rest of his active life he never removed from Delhi at all. For over thirty years he dedicated his great powers to the service of St. Steven's College, and he gave to the work his entire unremitting devotion. He became Principal of the College in the year 1905.

At the age of thirty he married a Punjabi lady, and three children were born to him, who still survive. The eldest, whose name is Sudhir Rudra, is now a professor at Allahabad University. His daughter is married to Prof. G. C. Chatterji of the Government College, Lahore. His youngest son Ajit has gained a Royal Commission in the Indian Army and will soon be promoted to a Captaincy.

I have never had such a friend in all my life as Susil Rudra was to me ever since I came out to Delhi in 1904. He saved me from a thousand pitfalls, and gave me a true instinct which enabled me to understand India as I could never have understood, if I had been left to my resources. Far more than this, he made his own house my home and his children became my children. I lived with him and we became quite inseparable. For our holidays we went together up to Kotgarh in the Simla Hills, and stayed with S. E. Stokes and met there also Sadhu Sunder Singh. Even to-day, now that my friend Susil is no more, I feel that I have, in the homes of his children a house of rest where I shall always be welcome and shall occupy the place that Susil himself occupied when he was alive.

One of the greatest sacrifices of Susil Rudra's life was probably the day on which he finally urged me to give up the work at Delhi and come to Santiniketan. I had left the final choice almost entirely to him, and if he had pressed me to stay longer, I should have felt that it was necessary for me to continue in Delhi. But instead of asking that I should stay with him, he told me positively that I must go, and he gave me his blessings when I went. Few can understand what a wrench it was to him thus to give me up, and to lose me outwardly in his daily life, after all these years of inseparable companionship. To me also the wrench was greater than I can express.

Whenever it was at all possible Susil Rudra would come to Santiniketan, in order to stay with me for a time ; and when he came down to

the Asram he would endear himself to everyone in the Asram, from *Borodada,* the eldest, down to the youngest child. He often took classes on such visits, and further did much private teaching. His utter devotion to the Founder-president was one of the deepest things in his life. As a Bengali, he was able to enter deeply into the teaching of the poet through his books and poems, and his reverence for him was not merely intellectual but also spiritual. He regarded him in his thoughts as one of the greatest teachers of the age.

During these visits to Bolpur, his mind had been steadily fixed and made up to come down and live with us, when his work in the College at Delhi was over. We used to talk over this plan, time after time, and on one occasion it seemed to me very near to fulfilment. He became a member of our Governing Body, and this drew him even more closely to us than before. But just after his retirement, when his plans for the future were being formed, the doctors suddenly discovered that he was attacked by an incurable disease, and he knew for the first time that his days on earth were numbered. The last months of his life were, therefore, spent entirely with his children ; and it was in the presence of his children that he passed away at Solon.

It is not easy to describe the beauty of the character of Susil Kumar Rudra, for its very perfection lay in its humility and self-effacement. Even to speak of him now and to praise him seems almost wrong, because of this atmosphere of retirement in which he always lived and moved and had his being. No one whom I have ever known was able so completely to obliterate himself in the service of others as Susil Kumar Rudra. No one was so completely unconscious of self-sacrifice while doing so. Furthermore, Susil Kumar Rudra had retained all the greatest Indian instincts of kindness, meekness, calmness, reverence, gentleness and peace, which made his life akin to the best that was in India of old. He was never regarded by any one as a 'foreigner' in India because of his Christian profession. Rather he became a friend both of Hindus and Mussalmans, and was trusted by both in a quite peculiar manner.

In his last moments, it was my own great privilege to be with him. His thoughts were always about two things,—his country and the Divine Life. About his country, his thoughts were saddened at the last by the persistence of the Hindu-Muslim disunion. But towards the end, his thoughts were turned more and more to the Divine Life. He would speak

about it constantly, and would say to me how his faith in Christ had made the life beyond the grave a living reality to him.

IV.

[*The following address was given by Mr. C. F. Andrews at the last Annual Celebration, over which he presided in the absence of the Founder-President*:]

It will easily be understood, with what extreme diffidence and shrinking I speak to you this morning in the place of those who were so far more worthy and had so much greater right and capacity to speak than I. In our own Gurudev's absence, which we are all feeling every moment of the time during our festival, we did our utmost to get one to preside, who is revered and venerated by us all no less for his goodness than for his massive learning: Dr. Brajendranath Seal; and when he could not do so, we sought to obtain the help of my own friend and companion, Babu Bhagwan Das, who is also one of our Vice-Presidents and whom we equally venerate and regard for his saintly character and learning. But he was too ill to come. Only when it was impossible to get any one else, among our Vice-Presidents, I was at last obliged to take the chair.

A thought which gave me more confidence than I otherwise should have possessed, was the knowledge that Professor Sten Konow is with us. He will shortly address us both in Sanskrit and in English, and we shall listen to him with the deep regard and respect that is due to one who has already, from the cold north of Norway, realised in his own person our Visva-bharati ideal,—learning patiently and profoundly, year after year, the ancient wisdom of the East with all the love and reverence that is due to it from the younger culture of the West. We have admitted him, and his own dear wife, Mrs. Konow, not only into our midst, but into our hearts. Their simple goodness and humanity has won our heart's allegiance more than all the intellectual respect which his wealth of learning has rightly demanded from us. We have felt, in them both, that human touch, which makes the whole world kin. I say this myself from the depth of a very grateful experience on behalf of us all.

And there is another thought, most precious, at such a time as this. In this sacred Asram, under this mango grove, we are not here alone. Maharshi is with us in spirit and Raja Ram Mohan Roy from whom we

trace our descent. For we are carrying out their spiritual desires and longings, which date far back into the past. We remember how Raja Ram Mohan Roy united all races and all religions in his own amplitude of high ideal. We can never forget how Maharshi, in his last will and testament, declared that this very grove, wherein we are seated, should be freely open in loving welcome to every one, of whatever race or clime, who wished to worship God in spirit and in truth,—not to man only, but to the animals and birds and every living creature. During nearly the length of a whole generation, he lived here in his old age, sanctifying by his prayers the very atmosphere which we breathe.

One further thought, which to me is dearest of all, is the daily remembrance, that our Gurudev himself is with us and not really absent from us at all. The human heart has its own unique powers of concentration, and the soul can make its presence felt almost corporeally,—just as the rays of the sun can penetrate space and make their warmth and radiance known in distant lands. Therefore we are feeling the radiance and the sunshine of our Rabindranath, this morning; and our own hearts and minds are illuminated by his conscious presence in our midst. All our hearts' devotion and reverence and tenderness of intimate affection we lay at his feet as we make our *pranam* to him who is our Founder and our Head. When the news came about his illness in a far off land our anxiety was painfully acute ; but only yesterday, we received his festival greetings with intense relief and happiness, and along with these came the reassurance that his health was improved and that he was soon coming back to Europe.

We bring back to memory with him, on his distant voyage, Leonard Elmhirst, the Head of Sriniketan, who is caring for our Gurudev with the devotion of the very same love which is burning in all our hearts. We recall the serious illness which compelled Rathindranath Tagore to remain behind in London,—an illness caused entirely by the strain of the Visva-bharati burden, which, as one of our honoured Secretaries, he has borne so faithfully and unselfishly year after year, along with his fellow worker in the same arduous duty, Prasanta Mahalanobis. We recognise with admiration the simple truth, that but for their indefatigable work, which has often gone on long and late into the night, at the cost of health itself, our Visva-bharati could never have passed through the early critical period of its construction, when foundation stones had to be laid on which a worthy superstructure might be afterwards erected.

I would add to theirs the name of the one who has been assisting in his absence, Gaur Gopal Ghose, to whom along with many others the success of this happy Festival is due, and also one who has been a most faithful and devoted Assistant Secretary in Calcutta, Kishori Mohan Santra, who is now lying ill at Giridih with an illness which did not prevent him to the very last from carrying on his secretarial work.

Before calling upon Dr. Sten Konow to speak, may I venture to say something concerning the original conception of the Visva-bharati ideal which our Founder has given us. For, as I have said, he is himself, even in his absence, inspiring this Gathering and giving us the strength to carry out his wishes. For that which we long most for, as a result of this meeting, is not to set forward any new designs of our own, but rather to understand afresh, in a living manner, the lesson which our Founder has taught us.

In my own individual life, the inner struggle to find the truth has been long and painful. Even yet the struggle has only just passed through its first stage, and every day I need to utter the prayer: *Tamaso má jyôtir gamaya.* For I have not yet attained. It has been necessary to unlearn more than I have learnt and the revolution in my mind which continued its reverberations all through the European War has not yet been completed. But one unfailing teacher and guide, who has led me forward from darkness to light and from untruth to truth by his personal inspiration, has been the Poet, whom we love to call Gurudev, Rabindranath Tagore.

I can remember well how I struggled with in mental conflict in Japan, when his lectures on Nationalism were being written. There were two points on which then I differed from him, and therefore I protested with vehemence. One was with regard to his use of the words 'nationalism' and 'nation' as though the latter word implied to him a mere temporary phase (and a selfish one at that) in the history of humanity, through which the West had passed, leading to monstrous forms of disease within the body of mankind. I protested at that time even against his final words, when he said: 'To me there is but one Nation, the nation of Man.' I objected and said: 'We must keep our nationalism, in order to be international.' The truth was I did not then see clearly how selfishly narrow such western nationalism could become, and indeed had already become in my own nation, with its imperial policy of world expansion and world dominion. I did not yet see, that this theory of the rivalry and competion

of separate nations for power, in the limited field of earth, was leading directly to the destruction of mankind.

The second protest, which I then made, was at the severity of the condemnation of the West included in the same essay. To this criticism of mine, he very nobly responded by inserting two passages which gave in the most generous manner his appreciation of the West, while leaving his condemnation as strong in character as before. It is clear to me now, that I had not then, in the year 1916, realised the havoc that Europe had wrought among the ancient civilisations of the world.

But the War, as it proceeded, came to me, as to many others, with great disillusioning power. The revelation of the Secret Treaties, by which the Great Powers were found out later on to have been busy from the very first, dividing the spoils, came as a terrible shock to me early in the year 1918. The indignation at these unrighteous treaties, and at the starvation blockades which followed, was so great that my mind became almost entirely distraught. Yet all the while I had with me one unfailing teacher and guide,—the poet himself. For I could see more and more clearly that the Poet had been right in Japan and I had been wrong. He had judged the evils of nationalism none too hardly. He had condemned the imperialism of Europe none too severely. What he had dared, with amazing courage, to say then,—at the height of the war fever,—we were ourselves compelled to confess later on as true.

It was in this hard school of mental anguish, that the lesson of Visva-bharati was learnt in my own personal experience, and a lesson thus learnt can never be forgotten.

Let me now trace a further personal experience, which brings in directly the Poet's own mind and shows how the Visva-bharati ideal seemed to take shape and grow. For I had the great good fortune to be with him at the time when he wrote the lectures afterwards embodied in the book called *A Centre of India Culture*. These followed close upon a small pamphlet, which was a marvellous *tour de force* in the way of irony, called *The Parrot's Training*. They represented the extreme point which he had reached in his desire, as a poet, to set forth the need of differentiation and colour and light in the world of mankind, instead of the drab unformity of a monotonous Western culture spread over the surface of the globe. He longed for India to become distinct and individual ; to recreate her own many-sided religious ideal, and to bring it to a unit, at some centre, in order East might meet that West, not as a beggar and

a dependent, but as an equal and a comrade in the forward march of humanity, giving as much as she received. The very title of his published book showed that it was this distinction of the culture of the East for which he then strove, as the first step towards the unity of the culture of the world.

I do not think that it is possible to overestimate the hold which this idea of the sacredness of individual freedom has always had upon the poet's mind. A vague cosmopolitanism is the very opposite of his conception of the future. He would intensify the individuality and uniqueness of each and every true growth of the human spirit.

Let me give a striking personal example. He would urge me again and again to cling fast to my Christian devotional life as a priceless heritage. When he saw me at one time slipping into vagueness he warned me. He loved me for the very distinction which the fervour of a deep Christian faith had given me. He did not wish to proselytise or convert me to any other faith. It was the poet and the artist in him that rejoiced in variety. The poet's own songs, as far as I have been able to follow them, tell of the glory and the beauty of the Manifold, who is also the *Advaitam.*

But in Europe and America, when he witnessed with his own eyes the devastation of noble ideals of humanity wrought by the War, corresponding exactly to these very evils of nationalism which he had protested awainst in Japan, his whole heart rose up in revolt at such a narrow vision. Slowly the thought of Visva-bharati took shape in his mind. Santiniketan, instead of being only a centre of Indian Culture, was to become a centre of world culture and world fellowship.

I have but sketched in outline some of the bare facts of my own experience. Again and again the Poet has gone out at the imperative call of duty in order to make clear the full message of brotherhood and unity and peace which our name Visva-bharati denotes. We welcome him back to our hearts each time, but we know that he will be called upon to go from us once more ; for his work, which has its centre here, is as wide as the world. Here, in this Asram, the East and West *have* met, and never the twain shall part.

Just out! *Just out!!*

NEW BOOKS

OF

RABINDRANATH TAGORE

PURABI

CONTAINS

Eighty-eight New Bengali Poems, 61 of which were written during the Poet's visit to Europe in 1924 and 1925. Many of these poems have not been published before.

Demy 8vo. 400 pages
Antique paper.
Price Rs. 2-12-0

SANKALANA

A Selection from the Prose Writings of the Post.

◎

Double-Crown 16mo.
more than 350 pages.
Price Rs. 2-0-0

In Antique paper
Rs. 2-8-0

विश्वभारती
शान्तिनिकेतन

CURRENT THOUGHT

A HIGH CLASS MONTHLY REVIEW

Annual Subscription Inland Rs. 5. Foreign Rs. 7, Sh. 10 or $2.50. Single Copy As. 8.

To the busy rich, nothing can impart so much substantial knowledge as CURRENT THOUGHT can nor anything point to the most economical and fruitful way of investing its money on books.

To the struggling poor, no friend can do a greater service than CURRENT THOUGHT, for, for **Rupees Five** only, they get a mental food with which they can keep itself abreast of the times much as the most wealthy scholars and thinkers

CURRENT THOUGHT, in short, helps you, as few else can, to develop your personality to its utmost possibilities: And the world to-day knows no nobler **summum bonum** than that.

Order for a Copy and satisfy for yourself that its claims are not based on the hyperbole of advertisements.

SATYAGRAHA IN SOUTH AFRICA

By Mahatma Gandhi is being pubished serially.

The following are among some of the unsolicited opinions.

I enclose my cheque for £5. This is for the books I have marked, for the balance to pay subscription for CURRENT THOUGHT until it is exhausted.—*H. G. Wells.*

It would certainly be a privilege to contribute to your magazine.....Your "Reviews" and "Thinkers' Thoughts" are certainly a characteristic and valuable feature.—*Prof. D. B. Kalelkar.*

I heartily congratulate you for your CURRENT THOUGHT which is improving in every number. . . . proves your good taste and is an honour to your country.—*Prof. Ettore Levi. Rome.*

I have read CURRENT THOUGHT with great interest. The excellent articles by C. F. Andrews, Dr. Tagore, Bernard Houghton and Ananthanarayana give a promising start to your venture, as does that of Mahatma Gandhi beginning a series which promises to be of great value. You set yourself a high standard and ought to succeed.—*J. T. Sunderland, New York.*

Your magazine, I assure you, is a source of great edification and inspiration to all who believe in sane living and sane thinking.—*Dr. Sudhindra Bose.*

We heartily welcome the publication of this new monthly journal in which modern problems are viewed in the light of the sure wisdom of the ages. We do not know of any magazine which unites in exactly the same way the most advanced "Current Thought" of both East and West. The literary standard is exceptionally high, and the book reviews, covering literature, history, politics, economics, sociology, philosophy, science and art are a special feature.—*The Service, London.*

It is a real pleasure to get a sign from you in the form of the first number of CURRENT THOUGHT and a copy of delightful book *Letters from Abroad.* It is extraordinarily interesting and I must ask the Publisher to put me down as a subscriber. Getting all these opinions together and trying as you do to weld them into a healing and humane doctrine is great work and I hope it will prosper.—*J. A. Spender in a letter to Mr. C. F. Andrews.*

I am obliged to you for the invitation to write for the new magazine which sounds first-rate in aim method.—*H. W. Nevinson.*

Publisher: S. GANESAN,

29, Pycroft's Road, Triplicane, Madras, S. E.

ORIENTAL BOOKS

Indian and Persian Art, Miniature Paintings, MSS., Bronzes, Etc.

Inspection of our Art Gallery is invited.

We specialize in all Books for the Study of Oriental languages, and other branches of Oriental Literature, of which we keep a large stock. Catalogues issued periodically and sent gratis on application.

JUST PUBLISHED.

INDO-SUMERIAN SEALS DECIPHERED.

Discovering Sumerians of Indus Valley as Phoenicians, Barats, Goths, and famous Vedic Aryans, 3100-2300 B.C. By L. A. WADDELL, with numerous illustrations and maps. 8vo, cloth, pp. xxiv-146. **Price 10s.**

IN THE PRESS.

THE MUSIC OF INDIA.

By ATIYA BEGUM FYZEE RAHAMIN

(Author of "Shahinda" Indian Music).

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS.

LATEST CATALOGUE:—Bibliotheca Orientalis. XXVII. India.

LUZAC & CO.

Oriental and Foreign Book-sellers.

Agents to the Royal Asiatic Society; School of Oriental Studies, London; Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta; Bihar and Orissa Research Society, India; Society of Oriental Research, Chicago, etc. etc.

46, GREAT RUSSELL STREET, LONDON, W.C. 1.

Opposite the British Museum.

THE MODERN REVIEW

THE PREMIER MONTHLY IN INDIA
DEALING WITH POLITICS, LITERATURE, HISTORY & ART

Edited by—Ramananda Chatterjee,

Circulates largely in all Provinces.

Annual Subscription Rs. 8-8-0, payable in advance.
Per V. P. P., up to Rs. 9.

If you want to form an unbiassed and impartial opinion of Indian affairs and at the same time be conversant with the world-movement in every field of activity, then read the "MODERN REVIEW", which is 'Modern' in every respect.

If you wish to reach educated and well-to-do Indians everywhere,

ADVERTISE IN THE MODERN REVIEW

Manager, THE MODERN REVIEW

91, Upper Circular Road, Calcutta.

WELFARE

ONE MAN CANNOT BUILD A TAJMAHAL

nor can one man or a few men build a nation. The ideals, no doubt, may come from one or a few minds, but the translation of the idea into facts depend upon all or most members of a nation.

EVERY MAN HAS HIS "BIT" TO DO

every man must come into close contact with the problems and facts of nation-building. Every man must help in the work. Are you doing your little? Have you decided where your place in the country's progress will be?

ARE YOU GOING TO FIND OUT YOURS?

You must know the practical problems of national progress before you can do so. The best way to know them is to read **WELFARE** regularly. Welfare, the journal of national weal and efficiency is published on the first of every month.

Editors:
RAMANANDA CHATTERJEE
and
ASHOKE CHATTERJEE

Annual Subscriptions Rs. 6 Post Free. Single Copy As. 8 only.
It deals with the problems of national health, wealth, strength and happiness.

Send your Subscription to the Manager,

WELFARE—91, Upper Circular Road, Calcutta.

PRODUCTION IN INDIA

A comparative study in national productivity

BY

RAJANI KANTA DAS, M.A., M.SC., Ph.D.

Director of Rural Survey, Visva-bharati; Former Lecturer in Economics, New York University; Late Special Lecturer on Labor and Population, College of the City of New York; One-time Lecturer in Economics, North-Western University, Chicago; Sometime Special Agent, Department of Labor, United States Government.

The main object of this study is to help in building up the objective background for national thinking on the question of the wealth and welfare of the people. With a very brief description of the nature of production and prosperity, the book discusses historically and statistically the chief resources of the country and the various industries instituted for their utilisation and compares them with those of other advanced countries. The principal industrial products of India, in aggregate and *per capita*, are also discussed and compared with a view to determining the economic condition of the people, both absolute and relative. In conclusion, the present status of national productivity is noted and the fundamental cause of insufficient production indicated.

TALISMANS AND CHARMS

For those People to Avoid all Sorts of Misfortunes and enter the Gates of Successful Life.

	RS.	A.
For Honour, Riches, Learning and Greatness	7	8
For Health, Physical Strength, etc.	7	8
For Power of Eloquence, Speeches, etc.	7	8
For Success in any Undertaking or Litigation, etc. ...	10	0
For Success in Sport, Racing, Cards, Games of Chance, etc.	7	8
For Success in Spiritual and Religious Life	10	0
For Success in Trade and Business	10	0
For Men's Love to Women ...	7	8
For Women's Love to Men ...	10	0
For Love of Opposite Sex, Attractive Power ...	7	8
For Agricultural Prosperity, Farming, Good Crops, etc. ...	7	8
For Success in Mining Plumbago, etc. ...	100	0
For Success in Gemming ...	225	0
Rabbi Solomon's Special Talisman for every success ...	15	0
Specially valued and worn by every successful Hebrew, 2nd quality	21	0
Specially valued and worn by every successful Hebrew, 1st quality	30	0

NOTE.—A Money Order or G. C. Notes will bring the Talisman to your door. One Extensive Life Reading Rs. 15, two Rs. 25, three Rs. 30 or more at a time at Rs. 10 per reading. Remit with birth date. Always the full amount should be remitted in advance. No V. P. P. Apply to :—

D. A. RAM DUTH, *Astrologer.*

No. 30 & 55 (V.B.) Cheku Street, Colombo, (Ceylon).

THAKORLAL HIRALAL & CO.

Our name is synonymous of **Good Value and Reliable Goods.** Ever since the inception of our firm we have always strictly adhered to the

ONE RATE POLICY

This Policy has secured for us the confidence of the public—

AS JEWELLERS, GOLD AND SILVERSMITHS

and dealers in

PRECIOUS STONES

Our reputation as Diamond Merchants is *"Sans Reproche"*

—

MERCANTILE BLDGS.

12, Lall Bazar Street

P. O. Box 104

CALCUTTA